



TURKEY IN TRANSITION

G. F. ABBOTT

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G. F. ABBOTT

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WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

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TURKEY IN TRANSITION



AN OTTOMAN M.P., "THE PHILOSOPHER."

(From the Turkish comic journal *Kalem*.)

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Turkey in Transition



CHAPTER I

AN OLD STORY

"THE Revolution has changed Turkey completely," he said, with enthusiasm.

"Indeed!" said I, wondering ; for I have no great faith in sudden conversions.

"Yes," he repeated, " I was there before the Revolution, and I went there again a few months after the Revolution. The metamorphosis is more than amazing—it is overwhelming!"

" I must go and see for myself," I said inwardly ; and, leaving my corybantic friend, I went straight to my rooms, packed up a few things in a bag or two, picked up a rug and a book or two, and set off.

.

It was an ambrosial evening, such as a day of storm often leaves behind it in Southern Europe. The sun was setting in a glorious sea of gold, and we, passengers on the Orient Express, were just composing ourselves to rest after the fatigues of dinner. The

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calm of the hour entered what I am sometimes pleased to call my soul. I filled my pipe and felt post-conversationally happy—a man at peace with all the world and with himself. I could say with the poet :—

“Fate cannot harm me : I have dined to-day.”

Presently my benevolence sought a victim in a pleasant and intelligent Mexican gentleman who was visiting our hemisphere for the first time. I began to bestow upon him some of my previous tribulations at Turkish Customs stations, so that he might be able to appreciate all the more keenly the cheerful contrast which, I had been told, they presented under the new dispensation.

“Now,” said I, in conclusion, “if all I hear is correct, you can cross the Ottoman frontier not the poorer by a single piastre, and you can glide on into the heart of the Sultan’s dominions with undisturbed luggage and temper unruffled. The impertinences and speculations which formerly——”

I had got thus far in my peroration—we had in the meanwhile left the Bulgarian and Ottoman sentries scowling peacefully at each other across the imaginary gulf which, I had been led to believe, no longer separated civilisation from its opposite—when Fate, in the form of the Turkish Customs officials, appeared on the scene to rob my eloquent panegyric of its point and my pipe of its flavour.

Our luggage was ransacked with the same ruthless conscientiousness as in the days of yore, our passports were scrutinised with the same painstaking stupidity ; and both operations were inspired by the same old passion for *bakshish*. It so happened that none of us

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innocent pilgrims to the sanctuary of new-born Freedom had thought it necessary to have our passports *visa'd* by an Ottoman consul. Indeed, it was by a mere happy afterthought, due to a sort of subconscious scepticism, that I had any passport at all. For our excessive optimism we each were fined forty piastres.

So far the metamorphosis of which my corybantic friend had sung was invisible to the ordinary eye. Nor did it become more conspicuous as we moved further into the Sultan's dominions. At each station we found the same tattered beggars, truculent *hamals*, whining cripples, and hungry hangers-on. Beyond the stations we saw the same bare, scarped hills and ill-conditioned scraggy fields; the same dry yellow-brown plains; the same wastes of weedy desolation. The river Maritza seemed to weep at its own lot as it flowed mournfully between banks shaded by willows only where Allah, in a fit of absent-mindedness, had permitted them to grow: how different from the same river on the other side of the frontier!

"Yes," I had to confess to my Mexican companion. "The Turkey I see is the Turkey I have always known. Nothing has changed."

The disillusion grew with every mile we covered. The same deep-furrowed faces, the same drab dresses, and the same lazy voices saluted our senses everywhere.

Next morning the sun rose over another familiar sight: a dilapidated farmhouse surrounded by unkempt stacks, crazy cowsheds, tumble-down stables, and stable-like, uncared-for cottages with a tapestry of dung-cakes on their walls. It was a typical Turkish *tchiftlik*. In the middle of the open space which

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might, for want of a vaguer term, be called a courtyard, stood the inevitable huddle of obsolete ploughs and superannuated gear, and the equally inevitable heap of farm refuse with a flock of lenten fowls scratching eagerly upon it. Between these two monuments could be seen a buffalo wagon resting on its shafts, and close by a ragged rustic resting on his hams. Three pigs wallow beatifically in a pool of stagnant rain-water, and over yonder expanse of flowering weeds, that ought to be a field but is only a parody on a meadow, roam the under-fed, over-driven cattle—buffaloes, oxen, and a solitary sad-faced ass. Further out, a lean, lank-visaged villain perambulates, flint-lock on shoulder, looking out for birds of prey, feathered or not. Over the whole landscape hangs a delicious scent of newly-mown, half-gathered hay and a distressing suggestion of immemorial sloth.

Shortly afterwards we find ourselves in the grey wooden suburbs of the capital; we thunder past its populous slums and ruined towers and are flung into the indescribable battlefield of porters, touts, pick-pockets, cabdrivers, and distracted policemen which has long been known as the Constantinople railway station. Here also nothing has changed. All the old characteristics of the capital are present.

But let us not be too hasty. If Stamboul at first sight remains as familiar and as filthy as ever, we must not forget that she also remains as inscrutable as ever. She possesses a genuine Oriental lady's shyness of revealing her charms and her secrets to the casual stranger. She is a book that does not allow itself to be skimmed—like a six-shilling novel

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or a parliamentary speech—by him who runs to catch his train. To be understood, it must be carefully conned over page by page and line by line—like a volume of Browning's poetry; and even then, it may leave the student in the condition in which such a volume so often leaves him—with his head full of ideas, only he does not quite know what they are.

.

What the casual stranger usually sees in the tourist-haunted hotels and shop-flanked thoroughfares of Pera, with their tramcar lines and latest Paris fashions, is not at all Constantinople, but only a foreign gloss clumsily interpolated into the old text. The West still ends, but the East no longer begins here. Pera is a kind of borderland between two worlds. On arriving at its main street you feel as if you had reached the estuary of Europe: a place where the current of Occidental culture spreads thinly over the ocean of Oriental life, modifying, maybe, its colour, but leaving its depths untouched. The world of intellectual movements, of feverish speculations in philosophy, faith, or finance, of neurotic experiments in literature, art, or cookery, is behind you; the rush and roar of Western activity and dissipation have ceased to distract you. Yet the dreamland of tapering minarets and veiled faces, of drowsy spices and hushed voices, is not yet in sight. The calm and the charm of Asia have departed from Pera to make room for the ostentatious banality of a pseudo-European civilisation—the symbols whereof are stuccoed dwellings, commodious, cheaply magnificent, decorously ugly;

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swaggering diplomats, Parisian novels, would-be Parisian bonnets, and all those exotic abominations which, here as elsewhere, are fast turning the East into a colossal, comico-tragic caricature of the West.

They are, no doubt, useful in their way—all these modern improvements—useful and inevitable; but they are, none the less, unbeautiful and indefinitely unreal. You conclude, with a sigh, that you have come a century too late, or too soon, and you are glad to turn your face away from the pretentious xenicisms of Pera to the sincerities of the native quarters. The real Stamboul, you soon discover, spreads across the gleaming blue waters of the Golden Horn—with its forest of tall masts flying the flags of half the nations of the world and its fleet of long, narrow pointed boats—miracles of swiftness and swan-like grace—flashing to and fro over the waves. Thither, climbing down the hill of Pera and wading through the noisome market of Galata, must the inquisitive student betake himself. But he must wait, if he is wise, for the night; for Stamboul is a book that can be read best in the dark.

The sun has set. The cypress-spires and the pinacles of the myriad minarets that taper heavenwards stand out like giant silhouettes against the violet sky. The vast domes of the mosques curve up darkly from amid the green trees and weather-browned tile-roofs scattered thickly over the heights of Stamboul. The crepuscule has already faded into night. The stars are twinkling up above and the dogs are barking down below, as you descend from the modernised parts of the city, cross the bridge, now deserted, and penetrate up into the more primitive quarters.

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The journey is like a journey in a dream : gradually, imperceptibly, mysteriously, you find that you have moved from one world into another—from the comparatively known into the utterly unknown.

The streets, as you go on, grow narrower, more tortuous, more steep, and less noisy. Presently you begin to hear your own footsteps falling on the rough cobbles louder and louder. Now and then you meet a turbaned passenger preceded by a lantern-bearer. You follow him, and you find yourself in regions where a lantern-bearer is no idle luxury—regions where the darkness is accentuated rather than relieved by the rare light that flickers aloft from some latticed and iron-barred window. Your precursor has stopped at a small wooden building: you hear the jingle of an iron ring that does duty for a knocker, a small, heavy door opens timidly, and he vanishes with the lantern-bearer. You draw nearer, to find yourself outside a parochial *tekké* which stands in the middle of a cemetery bristling with turbaned tombstones, all aslant and awry, with the gaunt, ghostly minaret of a decaying mosque smiling grimly down upon them. A little further on there yawn some dens, dingy and damp, half-raised above, half-buried beneath the ground, their roofs bowing so low over the street that, on passing by, you instinctively bow your own head to avoid knocking it against the eaves. Another minute, and you are entangled in a veritable net of streets, lanes, and alleys, numberless, nameless, and lampless, whence only an acquaintance with practical astronomy aided by a series of lucky accidents can extricate you.

As you grope your way about, often losing yourself in blind alleys and turning back on your steps, a

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queer, cold, creepy feeling comes over you. There is no sign of life anywhere; but everywhere the same brooding silence, the same darkness, the same air of a long-dead existence. The very stars which sparkle with such uncanny distinctness in the far-off heavens seem to be holding their breath. It is impossible to believe that only a stone's-throw off there are boulevards ablaze with lamps and alive with the rattle of tramcars. You find it far easier to believe that those boulevards, the hotel where you dined, the French-speaking waiters who waited on you, the Reuter's telegrams which you perused at the club, are only a dream of the night, and that you really are in the capital of Harun al Rashid. You expect every moment to see the good Caliph stealing round a corner in his disguise; you begin to frame a suitably fabulous petition in answer to the magnificent offer he is sure to make to you—when all of a sudden the sharp clatter of the watchman's club, as it strikes the hours of the night on the cobbles, rouses you to a sense of reality. You move cautiously in the direction of the unwelcome sound, and presently the twinkling lights of the ships below and of Pera across burst upon your vision. You are once more awake and very sorry for yourself.

But he who wishes to master the million discords that make up the harmony of Stamboul must not rest satisfied with a peep into the first chapter and the last. The two extremes meet on the loosely-jointed Galata bridge which spans the Golden Horn, uniting the banalities of the one world to the mysteries of the other. If mouldy, mosaic-crusted mosques; if dusky bazaars, rich in manifold scents

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and a varied store of Persian silks, of gold, of enamelled brass and of Oriental pearl; if stately mansions of modern Turkish pashas and ancient Greek patriarchs; if the sacred pride of Eyoub and the historic majesty of the Phanar possess no attractions for the student, he can obtain a summary of the living contents of the volume by taking up his station at either end of that rickety and wonderful bridge. From that point of vantage he can watch hour after hour the tide of Eastern life flowing and ebbing past in all its opulence of form, colour, and music. Solemn Turks and lively Greeks, shrewd Armenians and even shrewder Jews, fierce Kurds and haughty Albanians, hawk-eyed Arabs and dove-eyed Persians, fat-lipped negroes and frowsy-headed gipsies, they all pass and repass before him, jumbled up in *le plus hétéroclite des mélanges*. All ages and sexes are represented in the medley. Christian ladies in fashionable frocks and wasp-like waists rub shoulders with Mohammedan ladies fantastically muffled from head to foot in redundant robes, loose, waistless, shapeless. The former bustle along chattering, the latter stumble along, picking with anserine dignity their clumsily-sandalled steps, silent, awkward, almost sinister, like visitors from the land of shades. And between the two the spectator sees a country lass, in all the radiance of cheeks that with poppies vie and snow-white tunic, leading, bare-foot and happy, her vegetable-laden donkey to market. For all ranks are represented in this democratic panorama. Here the heavily-burdened *hamal* jostles the highly-turbaned *mollah*; the lumbering buffalo-drawn cart of the kilted peasant creaks before the prince's sumptuous

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and smoothly-rolling equipage ; a string of skeleton pack-horses, bending under the weight of newly-slain carcasses, breaks impudently into a prancing, foaming cavalcade of gaudy guardsmen ; and the semi-naked beggar treads placidly on the reverend toes of a purple-robed bishop.

You see ill-assorted and deeply-wrinkled hinds from remote Anatolian districts prodding their beasts dreamily along or gazing in open-mouthed amazement at the magnificence of Europe, and grave *hodjas* in green or white turbans pondering, as they walk, over the ways of Allah, with head devoutly bowed to the earth and hands locked behind their backs, telling the beads of meditation. Of an entirely different kind is the sanctity of the Christian priest, Greek or Armenian, who saunters past in his black flowing robes and tall, brimless black cap. They all serve God in their various ways, but the one who serves Him on Friday does not seem to think it necessary to slay the other because he serves Him on Sunday. Pray and let pray, that is the maxim of the philosophic East. All trades, just as all creeds and all ranks, figure in this panorama of a social democracy that can flourish even under the shadow of the grossest political despotism. Fish-mongers and costermongers, with trays deftly poised on erect heads, sweetmeat sellers and lemonade sellers, the one with three-legged stands, the other with oblong jars slung on their respective backs, pass the spectator chanting the praises of their wares in raucous tones or jingling their bells. And amidst all this rainbow pageant of Eastern caps and turbans, veils and draperies, matching the azure of the heavens

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above, the rich green of the trees on the heights around, and the brilliant tints—white, blue, or yellow—of the buildings, you behold the grey felt hat of some studious idler from the West and the short frock of his wife, striding hurriedly on their empty errand: guide-book in hand, camera strung over the shoulder, they mean to do Stamboul in five days. They hurry along in a world that heeds time not, profoundly unconscious of their incongruity. They look like errant pieces of driftwood somehow strayed into these waters where they are not wanted. They float, rather rapidly, for a while, then vanish beneath the surface, and the tide continues flowing and ebbing as serenely as if they had never been.

Nor is the pair of studious solecisms from the West the only jarring note in the symphony. A far more persistent and significant discord, although of a different nature, is struck by yonder gentleman who so bravely swings his gold-broidered sleeve as he bustles through the crowd. He is no common mortal. Under the other arm he carries a large bundle of broad-sealed, portentous-looking parcels, big with the stuff that diplomatic history and parliamentary eloquence are made on. Ministers and Prime Ministers, Leaders of the Opposition, punctilious Foreign Office clerks who consume their lives compiling Blue Books and omniscient journalists who consume theirs criticising them, frigid supporters of the right of conquest and fervid champions of oppressed nationalities, are all waiting in the four corners of Europe for those same broad-sealed, portentous-looking envelopes. But the gorgeously-broidered gentleman bustles along, know-

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ing nothing of his part in the great political melodrama. He brings to memory another gentleman—a victim of Abdul's—who, so diplomatic gossip records, sits quietly in his brougham sunk deep in the muddy bottom of the Golden Horn under your feet. But why rake up secret horrors from the deep? The sun shines upon the surface of the waters, bright, bland, and indifferent to human sins; the sea-gulls spread their white wings to the brilliant sunbeams; and the tame pigeons which have their homes in the charitable mosques flutter over the minaret galleries, or sit on the balcony rails and window-sills, filling the air with their melancholy cooing—so sweet and tranquil and tender, so melodiously attuned to the sadness of the East.

CHAPTER II

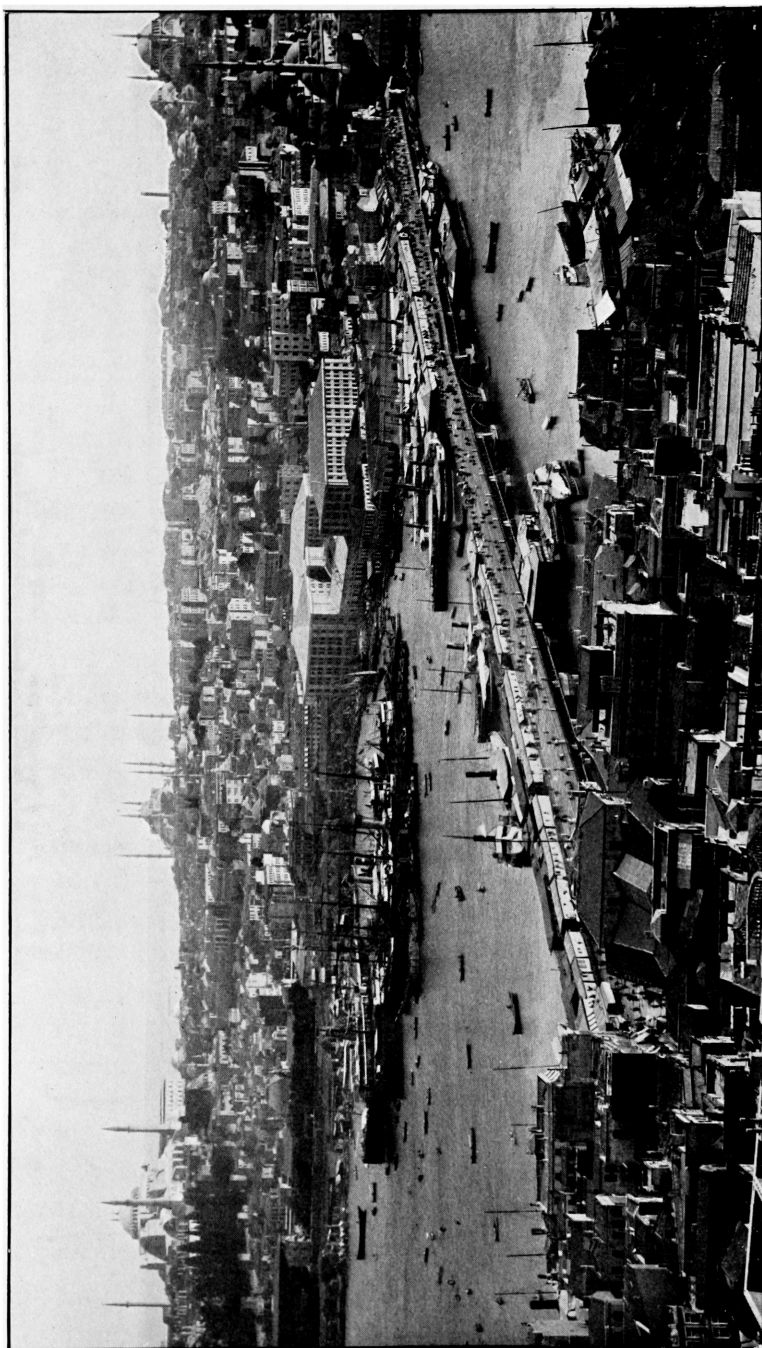
THINGS NEW

ALL the things described in the preceding chapter are typical of Stamboul—almost as ancient as is the skylit harbour itself. And so are the solecisms already noted. For generations past, wheresoever the visitor moved, by night or by day, in Constantinople, he was confronted with signs of a struggle between the past and the future, between what missionaries from the West would call darkness and light, and what you, out of sheer perversity, are disposed to call poetry and prose. But gradually, as you saunter off the bridge and lounge through the crooked lanes of Galata at one end, or climb up the steep alleys of Stamboul at the other, new features begin to creep into the picture; signs novel, unfamiliar, and disturbing. Your ears are assailed by the hoarse cries of many-tongued newsboys furiously selling the latest editions of journals—morning journals and evening journals; daily journals and weekly journals; journals Turkish, Greek, Armenian, French, German, Franco-German, Turco-French or Greco-French; illustrated journals and even—O shade of Harun al Rashid!—comic journals. You buy some of these polyglot oracles and you find in them politics, domestic and foreign

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—once subjects leading to the bottom of the Bosphorus—discussed seriously or humorously, wisely or foolishly, but in any case freely; and the most august personages are portrayed therein with a total absence of reverence. You find that clubs have sprung up in Stamboul as thick as mushrooms after a generous shower—Turkish clubs, Greek clubs, Armenian clubs, Albanian clubs, Circassian clubs, Bulgarian clubs, even Kurdish clubs—and there also political debates are carried on with open doors, without fear, and often without moderation. Further, you hear of political meetings, held in the open air and conducted with a decorum that should make the lions of Trafalgar Square blush with shame. Nay, you hear of strikes—a real epidemic of strikes—whereby all sorts of people yesterday readier to suffer than to murmur now try to assert themselves: railway employés, tramway servants, porters, lightermen, schoolmasters, they all seem instinct with a new sense of what is due to themselves and a new power for making their rights respected. What need to dwell on the giant boycott of Austrian goods which cost the Dual Monarchy millions of pounds? It was only the most sensational manifestation of a faculty for combination and organisation symptomatic of a new spirit at work in Stamboul.

You begin to suspect that your corybantic friend who set you off on this quest for an amazing metamorphosis was not, after all, a practical humourist, and your suspicions become stronger every moment. The *cafés*, once temples of thoughtless meditation—places consecrated to the somnolent quaffing of endless cups of coffee, or at most to languid conversation re-



STAMBOUL.

Things New

garding the prospects of the crops or the quarters of the moon—are now alive with amateur demagogues, whose talk is no longer of the change of the weather but of the change of ministers—Turkish ministers—nay, of Sultans! Not only the Greeks and the Armenians, but also the genuine Osmanli, hitherto incontinent and inarticulate, now read with avidity and discuss with some vivacity the contents of the public prints; or, if they cannot read themselves, they eagerly listen to those who can. Literate or ignorant, they all take a keen interest in the news of the day and comment thereupon with a certain measure of intelligence. The burden of all these coffee-house conversations is “change.” Here a gentleman in black frock-coat and fez, with a cup of coffee in one hand and a copy of the *Yeni Gazeta* in the other, holds forth on the reform of the military and naval forces of the Empire. You gather that a German general has been engaged at a fat salary (£T.1,000 for four months in the year) to reorganise the army, and that a British admiral is busy reorganising the navy; that a Turkish Navy League has been formed with the object of collecting funds for the purchase of new ships and has tried to accelerate the influx of donations by dancing. Last winter, you hear, the League organised a big ball which proved a stupendous success. Thousands of Turkish liras were during that night waltzed patriotically into the coffers of the League, to emerge therefrom some day in the form of cruisers. Meanwhile, even my inexperienced eye can detect symptoms of semi-animation about the fleet in the Golden Horn. Boats which had long been content to serve as beds for the mussels of the

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Bosphorus are now actually preparing for a voyage—just like real sea-worthy vessels. Already the British admiral has added a fresh braid of gold to the uniforms of the officers; there is violent polishing of brass fittings and scrubbing of decks on board the flagship; and there are dark hints thrown out of a grand review to be held one of these days: *inshallah!*

At another marble-topped table the absorbing topic is the reorganisation of the Finances and the Customs, likewise under foreign guidance, or, more thrilling subject still, the reform of the police. A special Commission appointed to study the subject has just issued its report. The two thousand metropolitan loafers who had hitherto devoted all the time they could spare from neglecting their duties to filling their pockets by the discovery, or invention, of treasons, stratagems, and plots, are to be reduced to nine hundred, and the ignorant and shabby gendarmes to be replaced by the smart blues of the Macedonian Gendarmerie—the one useful fruit of foreign interference in Macedonia. Schools are to be established for the education of both forces in Yildiz. And talking of Yildiz reminds the group of a suggested project for the creation of a horticultural college and a botanical garden in the park of the same palace. Further, the Government seems to have discovered that there is not a history of Turkey in Turkish. The startling disgrace has spurred it to instant action. An ex-Minister of Public Instruction has been commissioned to write a history from material supplied by the public archives. The Ottoman Empire, like the Chinese, is henceforth to boast an official historiographer! The coinage, too, is to be transformed. The streets are to

Things New

be re-paved ; the porters are to be disciplined ; the hackney carriages to be numbered, allotted fixed standing places, subjected to a fixed tariff, and brought under control as to the qualifications of the drivers and the condition of the horses ; the turbulent *touloumbadjis* are to share the fate of the exorbitant *arabadjis* ; properly drilled fire-brigades will be organised, and there will be no more indiscriminate rushing through the streets, no more diabolic yells of "Fire ! Fire !" To crown all, a distinguished civil engineer has been imported from Paris to bring Stamboul up-to-date.

"Alas !" say I.

"Not at all," answers my local friend. "What our city will lose in romance it will gain in security and comfort. After all, one must live in order to be able to pose !"

I suppose so: the mill will never grind with the water that is past, and the citizens of Constantinople seem to have suddenly awaked to the conviction that the function of a mill is to grind.

Nor is the awakening confined to the *cafés* and streets of the capital. One need not go to such super-sophisticated provincial centres as Smyrna and Salonica, which, thanks to cosmopolitan influences, have always been in advance of the capital. One has only to cross the Bosphorus to find the same spirit pervading even the typically Asiatic town of Scutari. There is in Scutari a vast Turkish cemetery where thousands of dark cypress-trees sigh softly to themselves over the grassy mounds under which lie generations of the happy dead. Not far from that solemn field of silence and sunny self-oblivion I saw

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a group of nondescripts—four Turks and a negro— assembled in a blacksmith's workshop. One of the Turks was reading aloud a newspaper; three seated on stools listened attentively; the blacksmith himself was leaning against his cold forge; the negro lay on the ground—it must be confessed—fast asleep.

The negro's slumber was suggestive. For it must not be imagined that the intelligence of the Mohammedan masses is always equal to their sudden emancipation. Here is an instructive incident which occurred while I was in Constantinople. An itinerant vendor of belts, accompanied by some kindred spirits, stopped one morning in the neighbourhood of some Jewish shops and began to read aloud from a newspaper that the Chief Rabbi and other Hebrew notables were to be hanged. The information was calculated to rouse in his hearers that religious fanaticism which—in spite of habitual tolerance—always haunts subconsciously the heart of a Mohammedan mob. Fortunately at that moment there happened to be passing by the commandant of the police station of the district. He snatched the paper out of the peddler's hand and asked him to point to the article from which he was reading. The peddler was unable to do so: the article was an original improvisation of his own. He was given in charge.

But such grotesque episodes notwithstanding, the general impression is that the Turkish mind has been roused from its sleep of centuries; and the rousing is not confined to one class or to one age. In one of the poorest alleys of Stamboul I saw a group of children playing at soldiers and practising the Liberty

Things New

anthem. A hymn to Liberty in Stamboul! My corybantic friend was not wholly wrong, after all.

For these are signs eloquent of a strange metamorphosis. Constantinople, outwardly the same great city of magnificent mosques, amorphous palaces, and dirty streets, is essentially a city transformed. But they tell you little compared to the lesson you learn by a peep into one of the bazaars. There, too, at first glance things still are as they have always been. The noise consists of a ceaseless humming made up of numberless voices, none of which rises above a monotonous murmur. The air is redolent of the soft perfumes and indolence of the East, and the light is subdued into a pleasing, drowsy dimness. Your mind gradually succumbs to the hypnotic suggestions of the place, and you hear without surprise the merits of a pair of socks extolled in the poetic language of the *Arabian Nights* and Allah fervently invoked to witness the purity of an ounce of cinnamon or to attest the genuineness of a doubtful piastre. You wander dreamily through the narrow lanes which wind their dark labyrinthic course between open booths overflowing with gorgeously coloured slippers, turbans, tablecloths; gold-broidered jackets, daggers resplendent with brilliant stones, and other treasures of Eastern art made in Austria. Some of these things are piled on the floor, which also serves as counter and sofa, others rest on the shelves, and many hang outside the shops, looming, in the prevailing twilight, spectral and evanescent like the disembodied spirits of themselves. The owner of the shop—bearded, baggy-breeched, and amply turbaned—sits cross-legged on a sheepskin in the middle of his wares,

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puffing solemnly at a long-tubed *narghilé*. Thus has he sat for centuries. Business has not vulgarised him. He sells with the same dignity and scruple with which he prays. He is a poet-priest in a shop, a bland embodiment of the æsthetics and ethics of business.

This impression is suddenly deepened. For hark! the *muezzin* from a neighbouring minaret is calling the faithful to bear witness to the might, mercy, and unity of God. Our tradesman has already obeyed the summons.

He has dropped the tube of his *narghilé*, he has risen, and, in the midst of his wares, is praying. Now he bows low—to a bundle of calico on the opposite shelf—with his hands resting on his knees. Now he sits back on his heels, narrowly avoiding the sharp angle of a small table inlaid with ivory behind him. Then again he stands up, with eyes bent to the sheep-skin and lips moving in noiseless incantations. Constitutional flippancy apart, I know of no sight that satisfies my sense of propriety to a greater degree than a Turk at prayer. His is not the fugitive and cloistered piety of the monk; nor is it the elaborate and ostentatious piety of the religious mountebank. It is a piety which combines sincerity with simplicity. It is far too unselfconscious to shun publicity. It is the ideal of devotional detachment. In the midst of the crowd the worshipper is alone—with his Maker. The humility which those genuflexions express is a real humility, not a subtle and sophisticated form of vanity.

The performance is over, and the worshipper is once more engaged in puffing at his *narghilé*—a boy

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from the coffee-house across the road has brought a charcoal between a pair of tongs and relit it. It is all done simply, naturally, with no affectation, pomp, or selfconsciousness of any kind. Praying and puffing at a *narghilé* are both acts of the same life, both human, and, therefore, in their different ways, equally sacred.

Through this strange fairyland, where Mammon and his rival seem to have reached so cordial an understanding, I pursue my erratic studies of the soul of Stamboul, congratulating myself on having found at last a region as yet untouched by Occidental snobbishness, unspoiled by Occidental commercialism, and as unconscious of itself as a maid that has never been to a public school. Thus moralising, I pause at a shop on the counter whereof I see displayed a number of comic papers—in Turkish. The thing does not shock me because I am prepared for it. I ask for a copy of the *Kalem*. The Turk hands it to me, and demands eighty paras for it. "The Turk never cheats"—that used to be the universal conviction, attested even by his Christian competitors, who would give expression to it in the same tone of voice as if they said, "The Turk never eats pork"—a curious characteristic of the Turk that differentiated him from the Christian. I had always shared that conviction, and was on the point of paying my Turk his eighty paras—when my eye fell upon a corner of the paper, where I read, "Price 50 paras." I pointed out the discrepancy to my Turk, and he, surprised to find me able to read the Turkish characters, confessed that he had made a mistake. The incident shattered my illusion. The spirit of the West has penetrated

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even into the sacred precincts of the Eastern bazaar. The Turkish tradesman has developed the commercial instinct. He is no longer a poet-priest in a shop. He is a predatory shopkeeper—unscrupulous, unashamed and unsanctified—like any other. He is civilised.

CHAPTER III

THE NEW WOMAN IN TURKEY

AMONG all the passengers one meets in the streets of Stamboul, none is worthier of a lingering look than the Turkish lady. There she goes: her figure shrouded in loose draperies of shot-silk—green, blue, scarlet or saffron—her face masked with a thick veil which reveals to masculine gaze only a pair of languishing black eyes; and, lest this protection against æsthetic impertinence should be insufficient, holding low over her head a brilliant pink parasol: no matter whether it is the sun that shines or the moon, or neither. Nay, even *yashmak* and parasol are not enough, and if the lady is of high degree, they have to be reinforced by a couple of *duennas*—hideous hags, black-faced and black-robed—or by a grim negro who follows his mistress when she walks and mounts guard on the box of her carriage when she drives.

At present she is walking, shyly, on high-heeled shoes, close to the wall, the pathless turns pursuing and shadows wooing. Now she has vanished in a dim, narrow lane, followed by her *duennas*. Wearied of her life-long leisure, the dame is going to do some shopping—the one public dissipation open to her—

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or, maybe, she is on her way to help some other dame to while away her daylong idleness.

This is the Turkish lady of the old school. Her figure and gait give you the impression of a being languid rather than graceful, created for the more rudimentary pleasures of love and passive resignation. Her face, when you are favoured with a view of it, suggests a diet on Turkish delight : soft and vacant and sweetly unintellectual. Fortunately, you are seldom favoured with a full view of it, and the imagination is free to create where the eye is unable to correct.

Not so with the Turkish lady of the new school. In her case the impenetrable *yashmak* has dwindled to a diaphanous gauze—a sort of gossamer dream-stuff—which reveals what its old-fashioned prototype was meant to conceal. Indeed, frequently she discards even this flimsy shade of a mask. During the delirious days which followed the Revolution of July, 1908, many of these *hanoums* were seen participating unveiled in the political processions, joining their shrill voices to the shout "*Yashassun Hurriet*"—"Long live Liberty!"—and even haranguing the patriotic crowds, like any male demagogue. Again, on the day when the work of the Revolution was crowned by the opening of Parliament, all along the route to the House, even upon the very roof of the Mosque of St. Sophia, might be seen Turkish matrons and maidens gazing without fear or veil upon the masculine mob below. On that memorable day even the ladies of the imperial harem, as they drove through the throng, availed themselves of the confusion to let the eyes of Stamboul rest, for the first time, on their

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fair forbidden countenances. More recently still, on the day when the new Sultan celebrated the ceremony which corresponds to our coronation, I found the streets, balconies, windows, and roofs of Stamboul packed with Turkish women of all ranks and ages, mostly barefaced. The same observation I made while sauntering about the capital and its suburbs on both sides of the Bosphorus, and I had constant reason for regretting the merciful *yashmak*. Obviously these new women, who know so much, know not the value of mystery.

The attenuation or utter rejection of the *yashmak* is symbolical of much. It shows that the days of seclusion and self-effacement are numbered even in Stamboul.

The time is coming, and coming fast, when the lady of the harem will demand that equality for which all sorts and conditions of women are clamouring the world over. Indeed, some of them have begun to demand it already. The *hanoum* who has received a smattering of French and music—who, if she cannot afford to order her clothes in Paris, has them made by the best French dressmaker of Pera—is no longer satisfied to be a mere satellite, one of several satellites, revolving gloriously and languorously round a masculine sun. She is beginning to cherish ideals of independent action and to cultivate a hunger for other than Turkish delights.

The new woman of Stamboul, Salonica, and Smyrna—for as yet she is limited to the few large cities—was born some twenty or twenty-five years ago. She is the by-product of that Liberal movement—social as well as political—which, conceived about the middle

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of last century, found an ephemeral embodiment in Midhat Pasha's Constitution of 1876, and a more striking expression in the July Revolution. From Midhat Pasha's time Turkish families of rank began to employ for the education of their daughters European governesses. A craving for Western culture invaded the harem, or rather a craving for what the poor *hanoums* conceived to constitute Western culture. I do not know where they derived their conception from, but I suspect the fountain must have been the pictures—for fortunately they could not read the letterpress—of French illustrated papers of a certain class. This, at least, is clear from the experience of a certain Ambassador's wife, who was asked by some Turkish friends to recommend to them a European governess. Naturally anxious to promote the cause of progress, she promised to do so—"a nice young English gentlewoman, a vicar's daughter, with a clean mind and irreproachable testimonials"—that was the Ambassadors's idea of what was wanted. She soon found out her mistake. "Please don't trouble about a governess," said to her her Turkish friends one day. "We have got what we wanted."

"Indeed? I am so glad. I hope she will suit you."

"Oh yes, she is sure to suit us. She can dance like a *houri*. She threw up a valuable engagement at one of the most popular *café chantants* of Paris in order to come to us!"

The Ambassadors laughed—she had too much sense of humour to do anything else. How could she blame the poor *hanoums* for regarding a Western governess as but a more advanced type of the female

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slaves they were already familiar with? Perhaps she recalled the picture drawn of those companions by her illustrious predecessor in a letter in which she described her reception by a Turkish lady of rank: "Her fair maids were ranged below the sofa, to the number of twenty, and put me in mind of the pictures of the ancient nymphs. She made them a sign to play and dance. Four of them immediately began to play some soft airs on instruments, between a lute and a guitar, which they accompanied with their voices, while the others danced by turns. This dance was very different from what I had seen before. Nothing could be more artful, or more proper to raise certain ideas. The tunes so soft! the motions so languishing! accompanied with pauses and dying eyes! half falling back, and then recovering themselves in so artful a manner that I am very positive the coldest and most rigid prude upon earth could not have looked upon them without thinking of something not to be spoken of."¹

This performance went on while the Turkish lady's two young daughters sat at her feet.

In the circumstances, it is hardly to be wondered at if the cold-blooded, ascetic, and reactionary Abdul Hamid set his face firmly against such a suspicious version of foreign culture; if, in 1901, he ordered all Turkish families in Constantinople which employed European governesses or companions to dismiss them and to sign a pledge that they would not engage any other in the future; if he commissioned his police to prohibit Turkish ladies from visiting European shops

¹ Lady Mary Wortley Montagu to the Countess of Mar, Adrianople, April 18, 1717.

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and driving in the streets with their faces uncovered ; if he forbade the importation of European books ; if he summoned a council of holy men, learned in the Law of Islam, to prescribe the colour of ladies' cloaks, the thickness of their veils, and the shape of their shoes ; if, in short, he did all that a mere Caliph could to put the clock back to the time it registered before the light of the West had begun to find its way into the Eastern woman's mind, filtered through French literature of a certain class.

But it was all in vain. The Sultan's efforts to save the morals of his subjects proved as futile as his efforts to stifle their liberty. The new woman survived the inquisition of the imperial palace as successfully as the Young Turk eluded its supervision ; and in the triumph of the latter, to which she contributed in many devious ways, she found an opportunity for proclaiming her own triumph.

During the anxious months which preceded the Revolution, high-born Turkish ladies of Salonica worked with courage and enthusiasm for the cause. Some of them acted as messengers, carrying compromising papers concealed about their persons, others afforded to the revolutionary committees opportunities for holding secret meetings, or the means of escape when detected. If the Sultan's legions of spies were baffled and hoodwinked, if a wide plot was so successfully woven under the very eyes of an unsuspecting police, that was in a great measure due to the devotion and fertility of female minds. It was not to be expected that female activity should end at the very moment when its object had been won. And it did not. The news-

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papers of Stamboul, which until yesterday scarcely mentioned the word "woman," are now full of the disturbing sex, its aspirations and its aberrations. Not the least valiant, or the least violent, in this conflict of pens are the few Turkish ladies who can spell. They dwell on the part, valuable if indirect, which their sex has played in bringing about the downfall of despotism, and they demand a share in its spoils. They who assisted so eagerly in the overthrow of one tyranny are not disposed to tolerate the preservation of another. To them the word "democracy" represents a precious, if but dimly understood, reality : it is the negation of, and the remedy for, everything that made autocracy hateful. They see in the magic term "Constitution" a talisman—a revenge for old wrongs and a sanction for new rights. One of these ladies, writing to an English journal the other day, declared that Turkish women, who have taught their children the love of liberty, will, "in dying, leave their hatred of tyranny as a blood inheritance to their sons and daughters."

There is much to excuse and more to explain this verbal vehemence. There are among those who indulge in it women whose husbands lie in the bottom of the Bosphorus, drowned like dogs ; women whose sons have died in the filth of dungeons or in the misery of exile ; women who have seen their beloved ones return home with limbs swollen by the weight of chains borne for years, with faces shrunk by privation, with bodies crippled by torture and souls seared by despair : grey-haired and dull-eyed youths whose hearts, worn out by sorrow, could feel no joy even in their deliverance, whose lips had forgotten

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how to smile. "Those women," asks our Turkish lady, "the mothers and wives of those youths, will they ever forget or forgive? No, never!" It may, then, be taken as an axiom that Turkish liberty will find in the Turkish women as staunch defenders as Turkish tyranny has already found determined enemies. But how is that liberty to affect the future social position of the Turkish woman? This is the question round which a whole tempest of words has arisen, is raging, and will, no doubt, continue to rage, until sense finds some means of conciliating sentiment.

Some of the new women, immediately after the Revolution, formulated the demand that they should henceforth be allowed to study and strive side by side with the men and on the same terms. "It is not enough," they said, "that our legal rights should be respected as heretofore. We want that our social liberties shall no longer be restricted. We desire to work with you, men, for the development of our community."

If it is true that the development of the germ of goodness in woman may be measured by her tendency towards self-suppression, the Turkish woman must be moving very fast away from goodness. At all events, she has done her best to prove the "fundamental principle of feminine passivity" a fundamental platitude due to masculine stupidity.

Naturally, the number of new women in Turkey—of women who love to order their morals on a French pattern and their clothes from Paris—is still very limited, and even of those who have outwardly adopted the European dress few are inwardly emanci-

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pated from Asiatic habits of thought. The haze of the harem still hangs round their souls. It is not easy to extirpate in a day prejudices which have their roots deep in an immemorial past. Here is a pictorial representation of the tragelaphic mixture of the present and the past as revealed in modern Stamboul. I take it from a European lady's description of a recent wedding in Turkish "high-life": "Most of the guests were in low dress and in the height of French fashions. Many were wearing the Order of the Shefakat. As soon as the bridegroom appeared, the women covered their hair, some with handkerchiefs, some even with their skirts turned over their heads."

Further, the power of the past shows itself in the utter lack of power of combination, in the total inability for organisation, displayed by the new woman in Turkey. She wants to play the suffragette, but she does not know how to set about it. Of course, this may be only a question of time. Meanwhile she is giving much food for reflection to her countrymen. Both priests of the past and prophets of the future pay to the Turkish new woman the respect due to a public danger.

The claim advanced by the *hanoums* that they should henceforth be allowed to co-operate in the regeneration of Turkey was at first sufficiently vague to meet with acquiescence. As to the means by which the women proposed to attain their object—namely, the promotion of female education—it was received with a benevolent assent on the part of the men. In fact, the agitation for the better instruction of girls has for years been carried on by the men themselves.

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So far both sexes were in cordial agreement. But all of a sudden an apple of discord fell between them. A Jewish lady ventured to give to the claim for liberty a precision of expression that aroused a veritable whirlwind of horror in the conservative Turkish mind. Writing under a Turkish pseudonym and in excellent French, this lady pronounced the crucial monosyllable "veil." She declared that the first and most obvious step towards female liberty was the liberation of the female face: before the Turkish woman could get a vote, she ought to get rid of the veil. The suggestion was a test, and it is safe to predict that the question "to be or not to be veiled" will soon become the battle-cry in the struggle between the priests of the past and the prophets of the future.

The Old Turks frankly dislike the advent of the new woman. Not long ago a gentleman of that class was seen rebuking angrily an unveiled female in a Smyrna tramcar. The barefaced one waited until her accuser's breath was spent, and then in terms clear and precise imparted to him her profound contempt for his views. During my stay in Constantinople a number of soldiers met a barefaced lady at Cadi-Keuy, and, not content with a verbal reproof, seized her by the arms, threw her down, and cut off her hair. In both cases the feeling that prompted the assault was the Old Turk's abhorrence of seeing Mohammedan females copying the manners of their infidel sisters. The feeling is not altogether unreasonable, however much the methods adopted in its expression may be reprehensible.

The ordinary Turk has no opportunities of forming

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an opinion about Christian women, except from the specimens of the sex he meets in certain places of the big cities; and those ladies are not quite of a type that inspires admiration. But the disapproval of the new woman is not confined to the ordinary Turk. Even Young Turks—men who have travelled abroad and have had opportunities of seeing European ladies at their best, men who have spent years in the Western centres of culture and seats of learning—men who have done and suffered much for the cause of liberty—men like Ahmed Riza of Paris, at this moment President of the Chamber he has helped to create—even these men who have published books in English and French have declared in advance against so subversive an innovation. They are shrewd enough to perceive that hasty and radical changes are to be deprecated for the sake of progress itself. The development of our women, they say, to be wholesome, must be carried on gradually and on Turkish lines. No good can come from a hasty and wholesale adoption of foreign customs, and especially of customs which happen to be diametrically opposed to the Mohammedan ideas on morality. Among these is the custom of dancing. Enlightened Turks see nothing immoral in dancing in theory, but they strongly object to it in practice. “No Muslim father or husband,” declared one of them the other day, “however up-to-date he may be in his ways, and however broad may be the views he may hold about things Christian, would ever consent to his wife or daughter dancing with a man.”

It is utterly useless to try to make him understand that this pleasure is absolutely innocent, that the

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dancers are people of refinement who are accustomed to mixed dancing from their infancy, and that in ninety-nine out of a hundred cases the meeting of young men and women does not result in any consequences detrimental to morality ; on the contrary it occasionally leads to happy union in marriage. "No," he will say ; "no young man whose soul is just stirred up by champagne or any such devil's brew shall ever come across my wife or daughter, and with his arm tightly encircling her waist, bringing her bare neck nearer to his wicked eyes, whirl about the ballroom until the moment when they retire to a corner to have a *tête-à-tête*. No—fire and gunpowder should be kept apart!"

The same puritan attitude is maintained even by Liberal Turks towards many other forms of feminine emancipation. Higher education? they say ; by all means ; but let it be slow, that it may prove sound. Let it also be limited within certain bounds. Unlimited freedom would not conduce to the happiness of our women and might easily provoke a reaction. The wisdom of this warning was demonstrated during the counter-Revolution of April 13th, when the Women's Club of Constantinople was assailed by the reactionary mob with a volley of shots. Since that date the Government has taken certain measures to avert in future the recurrence of such demonstrations. The Minister of Police has forbidden the attendance of women at theatrical performances and has issued an official communication requesting Turkish ladies not to walk abroad with their faces uncovered. In one word, the Young Turk

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position is that girls can have their minds enriched without having their faces unveiled.

Thus think the men. Nor do the men stand alone. The ordinary Turkish woman is even more painfully shocked than the ordinary Turk at the sight of an unveiled female face. In the delicate texture of the *yashmak* are interwoven the dearest conceptions of Mohammedan morality. It is true the concealment of the face and the seclusion it symbolises are not essential tenets of Islam. In older days Mohammedan women addressed Mohammedan congregations from the pulpit, led armies to battle, and performed many other functions suggestive of the widest and wildest publicity. But, though less than an article of faith, the veil in Turkish eyes is far more than an article of dress ; it is an emblem consecrated by the tradition of æons. Through long use and association of ideas it has come to be the badge of feminine virtue. A Turk holds that in discarding the veil woman discards her very modesty. The notion is shared by the ordinary Turkish woman. Neither the one nor the other sees any good in doing away with habits hallowed by the consensus of ages. Both hold the typical conservative doctrine : *πάλαι τὰ καλὰ ἀνθρώποισι ἐξεύρηται.*

Indeed, the normal Turk's conservatism is the acme of revolutionary audacity when compared with the tenacity with which the normal Turkish woman clings to the oak of tradition. Last April, while male associations from all parts of the country congratulated the Ottoman Parliament on what they were pleased to designate a second victory of Liberalism over Obscurantism, the Turkish ladies of Cadi-Keuy

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addressed a telegram to the Chamber vigorously protesting against the report which credited the President, Ahmed Riza, and his sister with the project of introducing the use of the hat among the Mohammedans. In this attachment to the familiar the Turkish woman exhibits a characteristic common to her sex the world over. Woman, in the midst of all her apparent instability and mutability, has always and everywhere stood for that which is established. She rarely appeals to first principles. She prefers, as a rule, to appeal, instead, to Mrs. Grundy. This touching reverence for authority possesses all the moral strength of its logical weakness. It is an axiom in mechanics that no chain is stronger than its weakest link—that the strength of any piece of machinery is the strength of its weakest part.

The Turkish new woman has grasped this truth with a perspicacity which is to me wonderful, and she has adjusted herself to its practical consequences with a readiness not less wonderful. Ferid Hanoum of Cairo may make speeches in public with uncovered face—and other Mohammedan women under infidel rule may plead in the Press for equality of rights. Salih Hanoum of Constantinople, while holding very strong and sound views on the emancipation of woman and on her influence upon the culture and character of man, knows how to temper theoretical wisdom with practical expediency. She was the first to repudiate the Jewish lady's revolutionary proposal. "No reasonable Turkish woman," she declared, "asks to unveil. All that we ask for is a liberal education, such as will fit us to become the companions and helpmates of our husbands and the instructors of our sons. Upon the

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kind of education we get to-day will depend our social position to-morrow." In this prudent concession to prejudice I see the best guarantee for the ultimate victory of reason. The new woman of Turkey seems to me to have thereby given proofs of *savoir-faire* that might well make her English sister-in-revolt blush at her own crudity. She seems to have perceived that all that man requires as a wage for his voluntary slavery is a little food for his vanity. She is quite prepared to pay that wage. Man is a creature of conceit. Flattery costs nothing. It is possible to conquer by stooping. Her new concession is, after all, but a continuation of an old policy—the admirable, I might almost say Machiavellian, policy which has enabled woman in the past, while enjoying in appearance only the privileges of weakness, to wield all the prerogatives of power—without any of its risks and responsibilities. For, so far from having ever been man's slave, I think woman has always been his taskmaster. To prove this it is not necessary to visit a Turkish pasha's harem, although such a visit would be most instructive. There you would have seen, in the palmy days when a Turkish pasha was the most powerful and most depraved of human potentates, the spoils of a whole province—the profits of a thousand crimes—lavished upon the personal comfort and adornment of one of his wives: "On a sofa, raised three steps, and covered with fine Persian carpets, sat the Kihaya's lady, leaning on cushions of white satin, embroidered. She was dressed in a *caftan* of gold brocade, flowered with silver. Her drawers were pale pink, green, and silver; her slippers white, finely embroidered; her lovely arms adorned with bracelets of diamonds,

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and her broad girdle set round with diamonds; upon her head a rich Turkish handkerchief of pink and silver, and on one side some bodkins of jewels," and so forth—poor Lady Mary's mouth watered and words failed her at the sight of a Turkish *hanoum's* wealth. All that the pasha's wife had to do in order to make the master of millions of men her bondsman was to be beautiful.

The Turkish new woman appears, from her conduct, determined to continue this lucrative policy. For the present, at all events, she is content to let man rule the world, provided she is allowed to rule man: "Give us an education that will fit us to educate you," she says, and the saying is to me a splendid confirmation of my lofty conception of female astuteness.

And yet the Turkish new woman, who is so wise, is not wise enough to be aware of her own wisdom. She actually begs that her English sister should go over and teach her the way she should go. The British Isles are to her a sort of Isles of the Blessed—an elysium of perfect happiness, wherein the sole cause of strife is a noble, high-minded competition in righteousness—the home of an ideal womanhood—a heaven of social perfection—a pattern to be copied; "We are doing our best to place English influence and the English language foremost in our future schools for girls," says the fair *hanoum* already quoted, and then she appeals to Englishwomen in the following terms: "You go and teach the savage, you descend into slums. Come to this land, where the most terrible want, the want of knowledge, exists. Come and help us to disperse the dark clouds of

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ignorance. We are working ever so hard to get away from the slavery of ignorance. The opening of schools by the English everywhere in Turkey would be welcomed by Turkish mothers. Simple, healthy, human teaching, such as Anglo-Saxons are able to give, is what we want. Give us living examples of your great, serious women. More than for bread and water, more than for any other want, we cry for knowledge and healthy Anglo-Saxon influence."

Far be it from me to rob any fellow-creature, brother or sister, true believer or infidel, heretic or Philistine, of his or her beautiful delusions. Besides, whatever I may say, there is little doubt that in her struggle for self-assertion the Turkish new woman will find a coadjutor in her English sister. Indeed, of the willingness to render such assistance I have had a curious proof. A short time before this, my latest visit to Turkey, I was asked by a lady friend in London if I could not put her in touch with the new women of Stamboul. My friend is among the earliest supporters of the crusade for feminine emancipation in England. She herself is one of the finest examples of successful self-emancipation. But she is English. While shaking herself free from all English creeds she has remained a slave to English missionary zeal—for scepticism has its zealous missionaries just as much as fanaticism. Now missionary zeal is incompatible with a sense of humour. Accordingly, my friend informed me that the idea of starting a crusade in Constantinople had been suggested to her by a perusal of M. Pierre Loti's *Désenchantées*. Poor Pierre Loti, I thought, what would he say if he were

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told that his French fantasy had been the innocent incentive to English missionary zeal! In my reply to my friend I suggested that she would probably find an equally promising field for her zeal—and certainly one involving far less expenditure of energy and money—in London. Perhaps, I hinted, it was not necessary to go all the way to Constantinople in search for disenchanted women.

This unsympathetic attitude of mine was prompted by a modest, old-fashioned conviction that, on the whole, people had better mind their own business. I am not conceited enough to believe that the millennium will come if only mankind would adopt my own way of paring the finger-nails or of parting the hair. I cannot quite share the view that the Golden Age will not begin until pigtails, turbans, fezes and other barbarous fashions of headgear have yielded the crown to the silk hat of British civilisation; that the light will not dawn upon this planet until every one of its inhabitants has been taught to express his thoughts, or the lack of them, in the language of Mr. Rudyard Kipling. How this wonderful notion about England's divine mission to play towards the world the part of a terrestrial Providence has ever entered the British head is, of course, a mystery which I do not pretend to understand. But I have a sort of belief that people generally, and the Turks more particularly, are quite capable of working out their own salvation, or damnation, as the case may be, without excessive interference from ourselves.

The Young Turks seem to agree with me. When a short time ago some well-meaning enthusiasts in London proposed to bring over a number of

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Turkish girls to England in order to give them a higher education, a Young Turk firmly replied, "No, the education of Turkish women must be carried out in Turkey, and on entirely Turkish lines. Methods of instruction are now under consideration, and it is quite likely that the services of European lady instructors will be required, more especially for European languages." But, the writer clearly implied, the Turks themselves are the best judges as to the extent of the assistance they need. It must be admitted that, all things considered, Turkish women have so far done pretty well without the direct interference of the British governess. The other day a young Turkish girl was heard explaining to a European lady of mature years the meaning of the word "Sanskrit." All that these ladies need is some direction in their studies. They employ their limitless leisure in reading; but often, for lack of guidance, they read trash. But then so do English ladies. That being the case, what should a sensible man think of a charwoman who professed herself consumed with a passion for cleaning other people's houses while she neglected her own?

CHAPTER IV

PARLIAMENTARY GOVERNMENT

I END my unmethodical meanderings by sauntering into the square of St. Sophia—deliberately and of set purpose, for I am informed that it is there that the new may be seen in its most piquant and significant propinquity to the old. The information proves correct. On one side of the open space rises the familiar pile of the Holy Wisdom, its sunlit grey dome smiling wistfully upon the green chestnut-trees which bloom beneath it and upon the crowds that throng the *cafés* under the cool shade of the trees. The gentle cooing of many pigeons issues from the foliage of the trees and from the cloisters of the temple, mingling with the murmur of the crowds and giving a voice to the sunlight. It is a voice that helps instead of hindering meditation, and as the eye dwells upon the venerable dome of the Byzantine cathedral, the imagination puts a meaning into its wistful smile. In its thousand years of existence that dome has witnessed many a demonstration of joy and many a drama of grief. It has seen Greek Patriarchs ousted by Latin Cardinals, Latin Cardinals by Greek Patriarchs. It has listened to hymns of victory, to litanies of sorrow, and to agonies of slaughter. It has watched

Parliamentary Government

the cross glittering proudly on its apex—a great cross of white marble—and it has watched that emblem expelled by another—a great crescent of iron. Yes, many are the things that aged dome has suffered, and it may well, in its grey maturity, smile wistfully down upon the greenness of men and trees. But the latest spectacle the Holy Wisdom was destined to witness was the strangest of all. On December 17th the space before it was filled with an ocean of human faces seething and swaying and surging round the flashing blades of many bayonets. Its very roof, buttresses, pillars, cornices, and minarets were flooded with the fezes and turbans of men and the veils of women. A whole nation had gathered together to celebrate the passing away of the “Days of Oppression” and the enthronement of Constitutional Liberty in Stamboul. And so it has come to be that one step now brings the visitor from the venerable cloisters of the Greek cathedral, round which have clustered for centuries the hopes of a resurrection of the Christian Empire of Byzantium, to the brand-new lobbies of the House that holds the promise—or threat—of a perpetuation of the reign of Islam.

It is a rectangular hall of moderate dimensions—an apartment in the chaotic Ministry of Justice—which (*absit omen!*) had already served the same purpose during Midhat Pasha's ephemeral Constitution. It had for over thirty years remained closed to all except the pigeons of St. Sophia, which, flying through the broken window-panes, used to build their nests between the cobweb-festooned rafters. Now the pigeons have been evicted, their nests have been destroyed, the cobwebs have been swept away, and

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the apartment is once more a Parliament House—whitewashed, well-lighted, with a great glass chandelier dangling from its ceiling between two stove-pipes. Each of its smaller sides is occupied by boxes destined for the Sultan, the diplomatic body, and other strangers. A gallery on one of the longer sides is provided for the representatives of the Press, and opposite it is the lofty dais on which sits the President. Down below in the pit are arranged rows of desks, and behind them you see marshalled the members, facing the President. There are about 270 of them, representing all the creeds and complexions of the Empire: Turks, Arabs, Albanians, Greeks, Kurds, Armenians, Bulgars, Jews. Sprinkled among these frock-coated civilians you observe some sixty clerics—*ulemas*, *muftis*, *cadis*, *mollahs*—distinguished from their neighbours by their green or white turbans, their baggy breeches, their beards, and even more emphatically by the superior gravity of their demeanour and the quaintness of their posture. Unable to reconcile themselves to the exigencies of modern chairs, these loyal upholders of ancient habits sit with one leg tucked under them, thus carrying into the Chamber the comfortable traditions of the old-fashioned Turkish divan. The sombre monotone of modernity is further relieved here and there by the brilliant silk robes and gold-broidered turbans of the Arab and Syrian deputies. For the rest, the impression produced by the Chamber and its inmates is one of restful plainness.

But, needless to say, the whole duty of a Parliament is not to look picturesque.

Hajji Baba once described the House of Commons



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as a house of madmen who meet half the year round for the purpose of quarrelling. "If one set says 'White,'" he remarked, "the other cries 'Black.'" Of course, we know that the House of Commons is not a house of madmen—at all events, not entirely. The systematic divergence of opinion which mystified the benighted barber of Ispahan is but part of a subtle and highly complicated game, based on the great moral principle, patent or latent, that the best means towards agreement is contradiction. We have discovered from experience that nothing more effectually assists a parliamentarily governed country to form a sound prejudice on the current questions of the day, or tends eventually to a better mutual misunderstanding between opposed parties, than the vehement statement of their rival points of view in debate, provided that the statement is accompanied with a firm determination on either side to recognise frankly and fully that the other is in the wrong.

The Ottoman Chamber, owing, no doubt, to its extreme youth, does not seem to have yet mastered these great principles of conduct. Compared to Christian Parliaments it offers the same depressing contrast which, in past times, was offered by the sober and well-disciplined Ottoman armies to the armed mobs of Christendom. Less frivolous than the House of Commons, more decorous than the French Chamber, this Turkish assembly presents the spectacle of a meeting of well-bred, seriously-minded persons gathered together with the object of legislating rather than of quarrelling or lounging. Perhaps they feel that the eyes of a censorious world are fixed upon them, and they behave accordingly. In any case, on

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the occasion when I fixed my censorious eye on them they behaved uncommonly well.

Despite the silence to which all these men had been condemned for years, they did not appear to find speech difficult. That the Greek, the Armenian, the Arab, and the Albanian should have a ready stream of words is not surprising. Fluency has always been one of their virtues. The surprising thing is that the taciturn Turk himself should have so quickly discovered the uses of the human tongue. Yet so it is, and, as a result, the Ottoman Parliament enabled me to listen to a number of really eloquent orators of all nationalities. Most of the speakers seemed to be earnest men imbued with a genuine enthusiasm for reform. And those who were not spoke just as eloquently as if they were, which is a great gift. Withal, there was a refreshing absence of formality about their eloquence. They avoided, for the most part, the tribune, preferring to address the House from their places. They were listened to mostly in silence. Hostile interruptions were rare, and the friendly interruptions of applause not very frequent. Misrepresentations were made with suavity and were met with courtesy. The Turkish language, in which the debate was carried on, sounds rather terrible, and mere emphasis may easily be mistaken for temper. But to the initiated ear the prevailing note was one of good-humoured politeness, now and then enlivened by a ripple of hilarity due to a witty remark from some irrepressible Greek.

Of course, it must be understood that here I am only skimming the surface of things. When I come to sound the depths of Ottoman Parliamentarianism, I

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may have a slightly different story to tell. Beneath its decorous calm this House conceals currents and cross-currents of passion not pleasant to contemplate : it would not be a human House if it did not. And many a green or white turban winds its hallowed coils round a head the stupidity of which compels wonder : it would not be a Turkish turban if it did not. But of those matters, more anon. For the moment I will content myself with only one illustration of my meaning. When the other day it was proposed in the Chamber that the official time should be brought into harmony with the Western way of reckoning—for at present, in the East, the clock is regulated by the setting of the sun, which necessitates a daily alteration—the motion was indignantly opposed by the clerical members as an impious assault on the true faith. They did not wish to turn the hand back on the clock—no! but neither would they allow it to be moved forward. Infidels might indulge in wanton interference with the ways of Allah. True believers should hold fast to the hours kept by their fathers. This attitude of the holy men made me think somehow of the Turkish warships in the Golden Horn. The mission of both appears to be identical: immovably moored to the same station by the strength of their cables and the weight of their anchors, they enable the spectator to measure the rapidity of the current by which the rest of the world is borne along.

However, immobility has its compensations. Thanks to it, the President might be envied for a very easy chair. As I have already hinted, it is not all beer and skittles presiding even over an Ottoman Parliament. Yet Ahmed Riza Bey—one of the principal

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authors of the Revolution which led to the establishment of that Parliament—though not loved by all, distrusted by many, and admired only by a few of his colleagues, had but to touch the bell by his side with the end of a pencil to command order. I could not help admiring his Olympian serenity. He is a tall man, with a pale, handsome, black-bearded face and a Paris-polished manner. His reputed want of mental robustness, which his critics call superficiality, may be due to an excess of idealism. His tendency to self-assertion, though probably arising from a superabundance of earnestness, is stigmatised as imperiousness. Yet his transparent sincerity inspires respect and his perfect manner fits him well for the functions of a leader in a society of gentlemen—no, gentlemen is not the word. These Ottoman Parliamentarians in their deliberations showed all the happiness, thoroughness, and seriousness of children at play. The only bored members I could detect were some of the Bedouin deputies. They did not seem to understand what their playmates were saying, and it is, therefore, small wonder if they looked a trifle unhappy. Such is a House that contrives to look dignified without looking affected and to deserve the praise of seriousness without incurring the reproach of dulness.

The new Sultan seems to be perfectly attuned to his Parliament and people. A close prisoner for the better part of his life, Mohammed V. had ample time to appreciate the uses of liberty, and he has not yet had time to learn its abuses. Indeed, even if he had the experience and the power, he does not appear to have the desire to abuse anything or anybody. A kindly, pious, timid sexagenarian, honest, affable, and un-

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affected, with more of goodwill than of will in his composition, this latest heir of Osman has automatically, as it were, fallen into the part prepared for him—the part of a Great Ornamental.

It is sufficient to watch him on a Friday noon driving to his devotions to understand the contrast between Mohammed V. and his predecessor. Abdul Hamid, suffering from a chronic fear of assassination, either avoided the distant places of worship—preferring the safer vicinity of the mosque he had caused to be built for the purpose close to the gates of Yildiz Kiosk—or he galloped furiously to prayer, feeling that with every yard of ground covered he gained a new lease of life. For the same reason the streets through which he passed were carefully expurgated by the police and strongly guarded by troops, while large bodies of soldiers were also obliged to pant and perspire on horseback or on foot after the imperial chariot. When the *cortège* reached the mosque a specially organised secret service kept an eye and ear on the assembled spectators. The new Sultan does not seem to consider his devotions in need of any precautions. Anybody can attend his *selamlık* without official permission or interference. He drives to any mosque, attended by the minimum of a guard, and the whole ceremony is a masterpiece of magnificent simplicity, devoid of the pomp and panic of arms. Mohammed V. has suffered too sorely from the tyranny of the spy himself to wish to inflict it upon others. He cannot forget the days when he could but seldom obtain leave to quit his palace-prison, and then only to go to two or three places strictly specified, when even during those rare outings he was so

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narrowly watched that he dared salute no one and no one dared salute him. It is narrated that one day, exasperated by the continued supervision to which he was subjected, the poor prince threw himself at his brother's feet and offered to renounce his rights of succession to the throne in return for the removal of the spies whom he euphemistically described as his bodyguard.

Mohammed V. endured this long martyrdom with courage and dignity, but thirty years of such a life—spent in the solitary study of a limited number of books and a continuous pondering over the mystic precepts of the poet Djellaleddin-er-Roumi—must have left indelible traces behind them. Yet they do not seem to have hardened a temperament essentially gentle. During the few months he has occupied the throne Mohammed V. has given many proofs of a disposition eminently conducive to popularity. He has seized every opportunity for showing himself to his subjects and he has missed no opportunity for paying to them the little attentions men value so highly from their sovereigns. For instance, while I was at Constantinople, on the Eastern 1st of May the Sultan, after the *selamlik*, accompanied by some of his courtiers, went to one of his country seats. He found the neighbourhood thronged with festive crowds. He immediately sent his first chamberlain and first secretary to greet them on his behalf and to tell them that he had summoned his private band to play to them. It is easy to imagine the astonished gratitude which this gracious act evoked from people not over-spoiled by imperial graciousness.

Everything Mohammed V. has hitherto done is in



MOHAMMED V.

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consonance with the spirit of this delicate expression of kindness.

He has made himself as accessible as his predecessor was unapproachable. He has taken under his patronage charitable movements, he has announced his intention to visit the principal cities of his empire and even foreign countries, and also to send his sons to pay a visit to the European Courts. Further, as if to accentuate more deeply still the difference between the new reign and the old, he has issued an order for the demolition of the high walls—those stern walls of stone so terribly suggestive of a tragedy without words—which surround his palace, and the erection in their place of rails through which the public may gaze on the interior of the Padishah's gardens. Mohammed V. has obviously understood that what a monarch gains in awe by seclusion he loses in affection. Abdul Hamid had based his conduct on the opposite principle. He studiously endeavoured to inspire in his subjects the fear of the unknown. It was no uncommon thing in Stamboul to hear peasants who came from Anatolia asking, "How is the Padishah made?" The question showed that the poor husbandmen attributed a super-human formation to a person they never saw. It was a tribute of veneration. But a more pleasing tribute was paid to his successor by a humble boatman, who, on rowing a gentleman back from Eyoub on the day when the new Sultan was girded with the sword of Osman, gaily exclaimed: "*Ishté kunkiar beuylé olmali!*" ("Ah, that is how a sovereign must be!"). The man had seen his sovereign at close quarters and, what is more, had been saluted by him. He

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was a happy boatman, and the memory of that imperial gesture will last with him as long as life.

A more substantial indication of the new Sultan's desire to conquer the nation's goodwill was afforded by his renunciation of many imperial domains, only stipulating that the men hitherto employed in the administration of those domains should be maintained in their posts. Likewise, in view of Turkey's financial state, he voluntarily reduced the sum of £T.25,000 allotted to him by the Chamber by £T.5,000—a gift which the Deputies received with prolonged and hearty “*Teshekdur ideriz !*” (“We thank you”).

Of course, many of these actions, so spontaneous in appearance, may be due to the advice of the Sultan's counsellors. For this reason I attribute small importance to the Sultan's studied declarations of attachment to liberty and progress, and his repeated promises to act as the faithful servant of the Constitution. These professions, however sincere they may be, are, after all, official and expected from a sovereign who owes his throne to the triumph of constitutional liberty. Besides, even if Mohammed V. were inclined to forget his part, there are many persons near him only too ready to remind him of it. The Turkish journal *Sabah*, during my stay in Constantinople, had an article which formed an admirable lecture on the functions of a constitutional monarch. “The Constitution,” it declared, “forbids absolutism and the arbitrary will of the sovereign. But it does not prevent him from working for the greatness of his nation. He is *millet babassi*, ‘the father of the nation,’ and it behoves him to act as one. The despot governs through fear, the constitutional monarch governs

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through affection. It is his duty to earn the affection of the nation which is master of his destinies."

The important thing is that Mohammed V., conscious of his inexperience, submits to guidance with a docility that some other constitutional sovereigns would do well to copy. I will give an example. On receiving two high officers of the Salonica Army, soon after his accession to the throne, the Sultan offered to each of them a present of fifty pounds. They refused it, on the ground that all the Macedonian troops were bound by oath never to accept gifts of money, and, moreover, begged his Majesty never to offer such gifts to his subjects! Mohammed V. bore the rebuke with a humility that would not have disgraced an early Christian martyr.

It is all the work of the Revolution—that tardy and marvellous upheaval of July, 1908. In order to realise the change it has produced it is enough to glance at what it has replaced. Turkey had known many revolutions in the past. The insurrections of the subject races apart, there were frequent palace eruptions and mutinies of the Janissaries which often disturbed the peace and stained the annals of the Ottoman Empire. But these movements, instead of diminishing, confirmed the monarch's omnipotence. Every revolt afforded an excuse for a display of brute force which drove the bold to death and the timid to sycophancy. Whichever side lost, the Sultan always won. Nor could it be otherwise. These rebellions were inspired by no wish for emancipation. They were supported by no popular resentment. They had no alternative to offer to autocracy. They were directed simply against the persons of individual

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despots, not against despotism. As soon as the particular object was attained opposition once more yielded to acquiescence. No Turk ever thought of degrading a dynasty the maintenance of whose supremacy was considered synonymous with the glory of Islam. In the Sultan's person the Mohammedan Church was wedded to the Ottoman military State, and under the combined weight of these two great forces any spark of free-will that may have been lurking in the Turk's heart was extinguished. Turkish patriotism was summed up in a readiness to die for *Din ve Dowlet*—Religion and State—both of which were embodied in the person of the Caliph.

True, the Sheikh-ul-Islam continued to be consulted in all matters of public importance. Hardly a minister was degraded or a magnate decapitated, hardly a question of peace or war was decided, without a previous reference to "the Wisest of the Wise." But this reference was merely an empty formality, kept up as a matter of custom and for the satisfaction of the people: the deference to the Sheikh was simply designed to enhance the Sultan's reputation for piety—most needed when least deserved—and to procure a more ready assent to his commands. It was an expedient for strengthening the sovereign's hands in a crisis and for absolving him from the odium of his crimes. The appeal to justice often served the purpose of legalising injustice. The Sheikh's moral influence over the public, instead of checking, promoted the Sultan's absolutism, and, as so often happened in Papal Rome, the spiritual power was only used to sanctify the misdeeds of the secular.

The Sultan was heir to all his subjects and the sole

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fountain of honour. At his word the son of a Prime Minister could become a porter and the son of a porter be transformed into a Prime Minister. In the history of the Ottoman Empire there are as many instances of persons of the meanest callings waking up to find themselves invested with the highest dignities as there are in the *Arabian Nights*. I especially recall a case of the seventeenth century, when a Sultan, while perambulating in disguise the streets of the capital, heard a cook inveighing against the Grand Vizier for causing through his negligence a scarcity of meat in the market. He immediately put the cook's statesmanship to the test by raising him to the post of Grand Vizier. History records that the cook made an excellent minister, which, perhaps, shows that the intellectual chasm between the Cabinet and the kitchen is not so broad as is commonly imagined.

As the humble were lifted to eminence at the Sultan's command, so were the lofty hurled into obscurity, degradation, and the grave by his caprice. For the tyrants of Turkey habitually acted on the advice which the ancient tyrant of Miletus gave to his brother of Corinth, through the emblematic decapitation of all the ears of corn that towered above their fellows in the field. But nowhere was the monarch's jealousy and dread of competition displayed in a more barbarous manner than in the treatment of his own nearest kinsmen, who were systematically slain or incarcerated.

The Sultan was absolute master of his empire. Its revenues were treated by him as his private income and its inhabitants as his personal slaves. No

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one dreamed of questioning his right so to treat them. The Turks as a nation had long ceased to have a will of their own, but were content to adopt the will of the prince whom Allah had set over them. They were as firmly convinced as was the Sultan himself that blind submission to his authority was a religious duty. The Padishah was God's Vicar on Earth—"God on Earth," "The Shadow of God," "Brother to the Sun and Moon." These were some of the celestial titles bestowed upon him by the courteous credulity of his subjects. Therefore, his commands, however iniquitous they might be, were the commands of Heaven, his wildest caprices laws, his most irrational speeches utterances of infallible wisdom, his most inhuman decrees divine. At his nod the proudest pashas in the empire submitted to loss of dignity, of fortune, and of life without a word of remonstrance. Indeed, death at the Sultan's mandate, instead of being resented as an injury, was coveted as the colophon of good fortune. It was related of a seventeenth century Grand Vizier who had achieved the greatest distinction in the service of the State, and had attained to the highest place in the favour of his master, that, when congratulated on his prosperity, he used to say that the one thing still wanting to complete his happiness was to die by the order of the Padishah "as the reward of his faithfulness and the consummation of his honours."

This Grand Vizier was not unique in his estimate of the Sultan's omnipotence and of his own insignificance. Every good Turk was persuaded that the sovereign possessed the right to deal with his subjects as seemed best to him. According to Sir Paul Ricaut, "Em-

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bassador Extraordinary for His Majesty Charles II. to Sultan Mahomet Han IV.," Turkish jurists used to say, "The Grand Signior can never be deposed or made accountable to any for his crimes, whilst he destroys carelessly of his subjects under the number of one hundred a day"—that was the limit. When such was the mental attitude of the learned, it is not hard to picture the attitude of the masses. Of political ideas they had none. Questions of administration concerned them not. They looked upon tyranny as a synonym for government, and upon its ministers as mysterious agencies which it would be impossible to avoid and impious to resist. Their mission as men was to till their fields, to sell their fruits, and to feed their families; their whole duty as citizens was to be ready at the word of command to join their colours, to serve the Padishah for as long as he chose, to fight his battles, and, if necessary, to die for his glory.

This abject surrender of a brave nation to the whim of one man would be as incredible as it is astonishing, if it was not but another addition to the numerous examples of Eastern despotism, such as we see it in the Old Testament and in the accounts of the Persian court handed down to us by Greek writers like Herodotus and Xenophon. The explanation of the phenomenon is partly psychological and partly historical. The Oriental soul—and this, despite the effects of Occidental influence, still is to a large extent true—finds its highest gratification in philosophical, or rather mystic, meditation. This pastime teaches it the existence of an all-pervading and all-controlling presence—a power vague, terrible, and irresistible.

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Hence that acquiescence in destiny and aversion from the exercise of initiative which have until lately been the prominent traits of the mind of Asia. Since all things are in the hollow of God's hand, it is irrelevant and irreverent for man to aspire to action. All that is is from God. Upon the shoulders of the great Atlas rests the weight of the world and the whole responsibility for its weal or woe. Human wisdom and human folly do not exist. Forethought is an encumbrance and afterthought a superfluity. Plans and regrets are equally futile. Providence watches over all, and all is ruled by Predestination. What is ordained shall be and what is not ordained cannot be. Fight not with Fate. Accept the good thankfully and endure the evil patiently. Resent nothing and never resist.

Pious resignation begets political languor, and the Oriental gladly leaves the conduct of public affairs to those whom Providence has called to the task. He leaves it without even reserving to himself the luxury of criticism. Whatever the earthly ruler does is done by the tacit consent, if not, indeed, at the express command, of the Great Unseen, from whom he derives his power and to whom alone he is accountable for its use. The prince is Heaven's constant preoccupation. To him is therefore due devotion unmeasured and unreasoning—a dull, servile allegiance, independent of the prince's personal merits and unaffected by the misery of his subjects. Thus, given the divine theory of government, obedience becomes a natural law and protest a sin. After all, it is easier for the Asiatic to suffer than to murmur.

The Ottoman Empire followed the common develop-

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ment of all Oriental empires. It became a state in which all were slaves but one. And such a state it remained through all its revolutions. The Revolution of July, 1908, is of quite a different kind. It has galvanised the Turkish man and the Turkish woman out of their sleepy half-tints. It has broken the spell of Asiatic torpor which had kept them bound for so many centuries. It has, in one sense, re-created them.

A population till recently narcotised by the evil eye of the spy breathes now freely. Men and women dare to think for themselves, and to express their thoughts without incurring the danger of being spirited away from their homes in the dead of night and consigned to a dungeon, to exile, or to the bottom of the Bosphorus. Even the Turkish official is almost transfigured into a human being. An ethereal smile has relaxed the bureaucratic austerity of the pashas, and the very Turkish policeman has, so far as appearances go, ceased to be a nefarious earthly policeman with a red *fez* on his head and a perpetual hunger for the contents of other people's purses in his heart. Yes, my corybantic friend was, in the main, right. All things considered, the metamorphosis is more than amazing—it is overwhelming.

But it is well to temper corybantism with a dose of criticism. The metamorphosis is amazing—true, but how deep does it go and how long will it last? These are questions that no man who has any reputation for sanity to lose would dare to answer dogmatically. Yet some help towards an answer might be derived from a careful examination of the forces which have created the metamorphosis, and upon the future course of which must its permanence depend.

CHAPTER V

QUESTIONS

THE bloodless Revolution, following upon centuries of apathy, anarchy, oppression, corruption, massacre and all the other blessings that had come to be regarded as synonymous with Ottoman statecraft, gained at once universal respect by the liberality of its aims, by the vigour and moderation of its methods, and by the noble self-restraint of its leaders. Amidst the unanimous chorus of applause which greeted it from without and the enthusiasm which it evoked from within, it seemed ungenerous and ungracious to doubt that the movement was, indeed, what it professed to be—a prelude to a new era of peace and prosperity, if not a signal of the approach of the millennium.

This optimistic view was encouraged by the scenes of fraternisation which followed on the promulgation of the Constitution. In Macedonia, for example, the various races—Greeks, Bulgars, Serbs, Vlachs—which had until that moment been engaged in a war of reciprocal extermination, immediately joined with the Young Turks in a cordial display of reconciliation. They declared, with every appearance of sincerity, that they had suddenly discovered in each other and in the Turk brethren; and men who

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had for years been trying to cut each other's throats now fell upon each others' necks. It was all very touching. Whatever mental reservations the different actors may have entertained, for the moment, at all events, the result of the performance was a tranquillity as unprecedented as it was unexpected. All the prisoners at Salonica had been set free and the police given three days' holiday. Yet, incredible though it may sound, not a single breach of the law was reported during those three glorious days: it was a three days' dream of the Golden Age magically realised. It seemed, indeed, as if the unspeakable Turk, suddenly endowed with the attributes of a wise and beneficent wizard, had succeeded in a few hours where all the Powers of Europe had failed for many years. He had conjured peace out of strife, order out of chaos, and daylight out of the night, by a simple wave of his hand.

Confronted with this miracle, pessimists and sceptics were shamed into silence.

But it was not long before both classes of critics began to make their voices heard.

Despotism was dead, but it did not follow that democracy had been born. The Revolution had transferred the government of the Empire from the hands of the Sultan to the hands of a Cabinet, which derived its power from the men that had created it—the Committee of Union and Progress, a revolutionary association with the military forces of the Empire at its back. This association had already given ample proofs of its omnipotence. It had led the army, it had stirred up the people, it had coerced the sovereign, it had established the Constitution.

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The Committee was the real ruler of Turkey. But was its rule a desirable rule? Was not a semi-secret and irresponsible society incompatible with free and representative institutions? Pessimistic critics were not slow to draw a parallel between this Turkish Committee and the French Revolutionary Committees which, after the overthrow of the French monarchy, controlled ministers at home and accompanied generals to the field abroad—with the guillotine—thus paving the way for the military despotism of Napoleon. True, so far there had not yet appeared among the Young Turks one strong man to assume the *rôle* of a military despot. The guillotine still was suggested only by its absence. But both the man and the machine might come with the opportunity. The Young Turk mind was haunted by the terror of reaction, naturally. The very rapidity and ease with which the Revolution had accomplished its object, the very alacrity with which the rigid despotism of centuries had yielded to the pressure of a day, were omens the reverse of reassuring. Now, whenever reaction occurred, it would inevitably lead to reprisals. Meanwhile, the actual government of the country by a revolutionary body relying upon brute force as its sole sanction was certainly not satisfactory. Nor was the danger of a new military despotism usurping sooner or later the powers of the old autocracy the only source of doubt to which shrewd critics drew attention. Other signs conducive to scepticism were not wanting.

The experiment which the Young Turks had undertaken amounted to nothing less than, first, the complete transformation of the Ottoman Empire from

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a decrepit anachronism into a healthy modern State ; and secondly, its complete transformation from a chaotic mosaic of heterogeneous communities subject to the same rule, but each preserving its own identity, into a coherent Ottoman nation.

What were their chances of success in this twofold task ?

Success in the first presupposed a radical change of the *personnel* of the administration. No such change seemed to be possible. The Young Turks were richer in patriotism and ideals than in practical administrative experience. Therefore they were obliged to have recourse to men who had passed their lives in the service of Abdul Hamid, who had been brought up in the ancient traditions of incompetence and corruption, who had not made the Revolution, but only tried to profit by it. Further, a purification of the administration could not be effected without money. Inadequacy and irregularity of pay had always been the main cause of official incompetence and corruption. The Young Turks lacked the means for removing that cause. Consequently, the reorganisation of the government of the country appeared highly problematical.

Success in the second part of the task the Young Turks had proposed to themselves seemed equally open to question.

There is no more efficacious promoter of love than a common hatred, nor a more ephemeral. Was it only common hatred of the crushing despotism which spared no class or race that had served to unite all sections of Ottoman subjects into a common effort at deliverance and a common exultation at its achieve-

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ment, or would Ottoman patriotism—a new and exotic plant—overshadow and finally starve out the separatist nationalisms which had for so many ages divided the inhabitants of the Empire? Their reconciliation was, no doubt, as sincere as it was sudden; but would it outlast the necessity which had created it, or would, once the pressure of the moment withdrawn, the constituent elements fly again asunder?

Such were the questions which thoughtful observers asked themselves, and the most experienced among them were the least inclined to answer them in an optimistic spirit. There was ample justification for their scepticism.

Among the Turks themselves, despite the signs of an awakening already described, only an infinitesimal number is as yet able to appreciate the merits of representative government. In every country the prophets of the new are few, the priests of the old many; and nowhere is the inequality between the two greater than in Turkey. The Young Turks form but a limited class of intellectual radicals. The masses have no political preference, unless it be an instinctive attachment to the old ways—the ways made congenial to them by the familiarity of centuries. The new ways may be better, but of that they have no personal experience. Nor have they that theoretical knowledge which often acts as a substitute for personal experience and as an impulse to innovation. They are either wholly unacquainted with books or only acquainted with books that have little to say about liberty. The poor Turkish peasants of Europe, to say nothing of the poorer Turkish peasants of Anatolia—and in the peasants must be included the

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soldiers who had been used for the conquest of freedom—have not the faintest notion of the meaning of freedom. Inert, illiterate, unimaginative, and unambitious, they know as yet only how to obey; and they will obey the first man who speaks to them in a tone of authority, whether his orders are to fight for the Constitution or for its suppression. All that is needed to secure their obedience is some skill in giving to the word of command the sanction of the Koran. The ordinary Turk still is at heart an Old Turk.

As to the Young Turks, again, it would be a gross error to consider them all pure and disinterested patriots. Many of those who took part in the Revolution were unquestionably inspired by the noblest ideals. But many, on the other hand, saw in the movement only a means towards the gratification of personal ambition and the liquidation of old debts of revenge. A common detestation of the palace Camarilla, which had so long exploited the Empire to the exclusion and oppression of all others, had brought about an alliance among men actuated by a variety of motives. As soon as that cause of cohesion disappeared, there was bound to set in a current of disruption. Besides, the success of the Young Turkish party had drawn to its ranks many time-servers who were anything but Young Turks in sympathy; many who, under the cloak of zeal for the Constitution, nourished a very sincere yearning after the old system of government; many who would be only too glad to enjoy the illicit opportunities for aggrandisement and enrichment which they denounced.

If we turn to the non-Turkish elements, we find the bonds of union even feebler. Mohammedanism itself

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includes, in addition to the Turk, three races that have nothing in common with him except creed: the Arabs and the Kurds in Asia, and the Albanians in Europe; all three peoples proud of their national individuality, never assimilated to the Osmanli, and often in revolt against his rule. Members of all three races had contributed to the success of the Young Turk movement; indeed, it may be said that the success of that movement was due in a much greater degree to the talents of those contributors than to the efforts of the pure Turks. Yet it was anything but certain that they would agree to sacrifice their national aspirations permanently for the consolidation of the Ottoman Empire. Certainly the past did not warrant any such anticipation for the future.

Although Arabia was conquered as early as 1517 by Selim the Grim—famous in history as the most sagacious, most courageous, and most cruel of Ottoman monarchs—the Arabs were never really subdued. They never quite recognised the Sultan's assumption of the title of Caliph, they never acquiesced in his protection of the holy places of Islam, and they never submitted to regular conscription or taxation. To them the Ottoman sovereign has remained through the ages an alien and a usurper. Their connexion with the Ottoman Empire has been a series of intermittent rebellions and partial suppressions. The Arabs do not look upon themselves as citizens of the Ottoman State. The only allegiance they truly feel is allegiance to their clan. Their patriotism is summed up in their proverb, "Honour your tribe, for it is the wings with which you fly."

It is true that under the appellation "Arab" are

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often classed races widely distinct in origin and temperament—the Mohammedans of Syria and the natives of Tripoli; the former far more advanced, the latter even more backward, than the wild inhabitants of the Yemen. But these differences in culture, though causing a divergence in material and social conditions, do not affect the solidarity arising from common speech—that forms an indissoluble bond among all Arab-speaking races and an insuperable barrier between them and the Turk.

The Albanians are in every respect the Arabs of Europe. After an obstinate, if unsystematic, resistance, their country was occupied by the Turks in 1479. Its subjection, however, was due not to lack of courage, but only to lack of cohesion on the part of the Albanian clans. For, like the Arabs, the Albanians, though a people richly endowed by nature with all the gifts that lead to greatness, have never yet grown beyond the tribal stage of development. While their Greek cousins of the south and their Italian cousins of the west flourished and perished and rose to political life again, these descendants of perhaps the oldest and purest race in Europe have remained in a state of primordial barbarism; the garb of the most primitive of the clans—the Ghegs—consisting chiefly of a gun and several belts of cartridges, their industry confined mainly to shooting, and their principal recreation being the conduct of interminable blood-feuds handed down from father to son. Tribalism is a picturesque existence, but, of course, it means disunion and national weakness. By a temporary coalition under a war-chief, the renowned Skanderbeg, the Albanians contrived to withstand the invader for

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some years, but immediately on Skanderbeg's death they abandoned all opposition.

Yet, although Albania was conquered it has been no more subdued than Arabia. The Albanians have never acknowledged the Sultan's right to interfere in their tribal affairs, and they have never submitted to regular conscription or taxation, but they have consistently preferred voluntary contributions in men, for of money they have none. To their virility the Ottoman armies have always owed their bravest warriors, and their versatility has always supplied the Ottoman Government with some of its cleverest servants. But the individual Albanian has never been a slave except to covetousness.

In point of religion these turbulent children of a rugged country profess an exhilarating kind of eclecticism. Some have remained loyal to the Greek Church, others have embraced the Roman creed, and many have followed the line of least resistance by adopting the faith of Islam. But in all cases creed is a cloak that sits very lightly on the Albanian conscience. Many of the clansmen in time of taxation come forth as Mohammedans and in time of conscription as Christians. Many follow the Gospel in private and the Koran in public, bearing two baptismal names—one Christian for family use, another Mohammedan for social purposes; the former being imposed upon the baby by the priest secretly, the other by the Imam openly. Lastly, many of these eccentric believers belong to the sect of the Bektashis—a sect Mohammedan in appearance, but in essence agnostic. However, be their superficial religious differences what they may, all the tribes of

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Albania are of one race, and they have a common language, a common code of customs, and a common ethnic appellation (Skipetar), which unite all the clans, irrespective of creed, into one national entity. It is true that these clans, since the time of Skanderbeg, have never acted with a common purpose, but their souls and their swords have usually been at the disposal of the highest bidder. Yet of late years—to be precise, since 1878—especially among the southern Albanians—the Tosks—upon whom Greek culture has produced an awakening effect, and among their kinsmen settled in Italy, there has arisen a movement for national unification and emancipation which is making rapid progress. The Albanian League, which was formed with that view about the time of the Russo-Turkish War, was destroyed by the Sultan, but its death has not put an end to the agitation. Already there have appeared several pretenders to the phantom throne of Albania. Now, whatever may be the ultimate result of this movement be, its existence clearly shows that the Albanians are not over-anxious to sink their individuality in the ocean of Ottomanism.

Not much closer is the connexion between Turks and Kurds—a population equal to the Albanian in numbers (about 2,000,000), equally clannish in its character and customs, and equally eclectic in its religious tenets. Ever since the conquest of their country by the Osmanli these highland tribes have been vacillating between the orthodox creed of the Turks and the heresy of the Persians, and, geographically situated on the borderland which divides the dominions of the Sunnite Sultan from those of the Shi'ite Shah, they have contrived to resist absorption

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by either. Three times during the nineteenth century the Kurds, led by their proud hereditary chieftains, rebelled against Constantinople—in 1834, 1843, and 1847—and tried to re-establish their national independence.

Incomparably broader is the chasm that separates all these Mohammedan populations from the Christians—Greeks, Armenians, Syrians, Serbs, and Bulgars—who have since the time of the Ottoman conquest occupied in the State a position of communal self-government that has fostered their national self-consciousness. This position, however detrimental it may have proved to the solidarity of the Ottoman Empire, was rendered inevitable by the theocratic character of the Ottoman polity.

It is sometimes affirmed that the semi-autonomy granted to the Christian communities was the result of Turkish arrogance and stupidity. The independence of the Greek Church, it is said, was a gift which the contemptuous Turk flung like a bone to the Phanar after Constantinople fell. "Govern yourselves, you infidels, through your Patriarch!" said the Sultan. "Your schools, your family life, let it all be as you wish. We spare your wretched lives! You are *rayahs*—mere cattle, always at the mercy of us who wield the sword. We take away its edge and point from you—for a consideration. But never shall you wrest it from us. Dare to try to do so, and we plunge it into your craven, infidel hearts!"

There is considerable insight in this view. But it does not express the whole truth. Nor is absolutely correct the other view, sometimes advanced, that the privileges enjoyed by the Christian communities

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under Turkish rule were due to Turkish magnanimity. As a matter of fact, neither contempt nor generosity had much to do with the matter. The policy adopted by the Ottoman conquerors towards the *rayahs* was the natural outcome of the conditions brought into being by the inclusion of two antagonistic cults under the same rule. It was not a Turkish, but a Mohammedan policy—a policy dictated by the precepts of the Prophet and hallowed by his example. In the second year of the Hegira Mohammed himself accorded to the Christians of Arabia a charter which fixed at once and for ever the relations between the two creeds and created a precedent which all Mohammedan princes who came after felt bound to follow. From the earliest moment when Christians fell under Mohammedan domination—that is, since the year 637, when the simple Caliph Omar, astride on a camel that carried all his travelling equipment and provisions from Mecca, entered Jerusalem at the head of his victorious army—the relations between the two elements were established in conformity with those precepts and precedents—in one word, in accordance with the Sacred Law of Islam (Sheriat).

That Law prescribes that the Christians, like the Jews, are not to be treated as idolaters—who must be converted at all costs—but only as erring brethren. They are to be subjected, indeed, but they are to be left unmolested in the exercise of their religion on payment of tribute. The *rayahs* were, therefore, subjected to a capitation tax, and, in return, they were exempted from military service, which was the privilege of true believers only, and they were permitted to worship their God, to administer justice

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among themselves, and to educate their children in accordance with the traditions of their fathers. Religion, jurisdiction, and education were in the eyes of Mohammedan legislators inseparable, and the concession of the last two was a logical corollary of the first. Motives of policy came to strengthen the postulates of logic. The jurisprudence of Islam recognises one law for the faithful and another for the infidel. This fundamental difference, by placing the non-Mohammedans at a permanent disadvantage in countries where they constitute a large portion of the population, forms a constant danger to the dominant race. The Mohammedan conquerors from the first realised this danger and tried to meet it. There were two ways of meeting it. One was the wholesale conversion of the Christians to the faith of Islam ; the other was the concession to them of equal political rights, including the right to bear arms. The Mohammedan conquerors shrank from both those courses, for both were opposed to the Sacred Law. The Koran does not permit the forcible conversion of "people of the Book," neither does it allow them political equality. The Caliphs were obliged to pursue a middle course. Fully conscious of the truth that, although a people may be subdued by the sword, it cannot be kept in perpetual subjection by the sword only, and recognising that the best security for their own rule lay in the contentment, if not in the attachment, of their subjects, they endeavoured to earn the loyalty of the latter by granting them the communal autonomy already described. That autonomy protected the Christians, in some measure, against systematic oppression on the part of the Moham-

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medans and guaranteed to them liberty of conscience and such liberty of conduct as was possible in countries where the victors remained armed, the vanquished were disarmed, and the two classes were divided from each other by the barriers of creed, speech, and caste. The conditions created by Mohammedan conquest were essentially conditions of slavery ; but the Caliphs sought, by ensuring to the *rayahs* their lives, their property, and their religion, to remove the strongest incentives to rebellion and to reconcile them as much as possible to their lot.

When the Ottoman Sultans subdued the Byzantine Empire they found themselves confronted with the same problem, and they tried to solve it in the same way. As the Christians could neither be absorbed by the Mohammedans nor be left entirely to the mercy of the latter, they were endowed with such powers as would enable them to survive the yoke without enabling them to shake it off. What was needed was an organisation subject to the Mohammedan rule and yet possessed of sufficient independence to resist Mohammedan aggression. Such an organisation Mohammed II. found in the Greek, and subsequently in the Armenian Church. Both these institutions fulfilled all the necessary requirements. They were subject to the Mohammedan State and yet independent of the Mohammedan Church. They also possessed sufficient influence over the *rayahs* to guide their conduct and to guarantee their loyalty. Hence the Greek and Armenian *millets*, or nations—communities paying tribute, in more than money, to the Sultan, yet managing their religious and social affairs according to their own laws, customs, and usages,

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under the authority of their respective Patriarchs. When the Bulgars some forty years ago seceded from the Œcumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, a similar jurisdiction was granted to their Exarch and a new *millet* was created. The Greek and Armenian Patriarchates, the Bulgarian Exarchate, and the Jewish Synagogue under its Chief Rabbi, constitute four *imperia in imperio*—each having its own ecclesiastical courts which settle disputes concerning wills, marriages, divorces, and the like, and each controlling the schools of its own community.

These are the main elements that make up the population of the Ottoman Empire. They may be compared to so many heterogeneous ingredients thrown into one test-tube at haphazard by some scientific humourist. To turn this mechanical mixture into a chemical compound—that is the momentous experiment the Young Turks undertook in July, 1908. The task is so colossal that sceptics might be pardoned for having entertained serious doubts as to its success from the first. Despite the temporary reconciliation due to a momentary feeling of enthusiasm, it was hard to believe that the secular differences between the followers of the Prophet and the followers of Christ, between the conquerors and the conquered, could be forgotten. No people live so much in the past as do the inhabitants of the Near East. Old prejudices of caste and creed were bound to cling about them. Centuries of injury, contempt and hatred on the one side—of masked revenge, of dissimulation and of hatred on the other, could not be wiped off in a day. The antipathies of the fathers would long continue to embitter the blood of the children. The chasm was

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too broad to be bridged over by a few fine words, such as liberty, equality, and fraternity. And if words could not bridge it, what could?

The sanguine authors of the Revolution had made an eloquent appeal to the patriotism of all the elements of the Empire without distinction of race, speech, or creed. All these diverse nations were asked to forget their national diversities and to think and act as Ottomans. The appeal, as might have been expected, was enforced by arguments of self-interest rather than of sentiment. The various elements were reminded of the bitter fruits they had reaped from their perennial enmities and their separatist aspirations, and an effort was made to prove to them that they had more to gain by maintaining the solidarity of the Empire than by seeking its dissolution. It was a heroic effort to stir up patriotism by an appeal to reason. Therein lay its weakness, inevitable, it is true—because in the absence of common traditions and feelings there was nothing else to appeal to—but none the less great. Was patriotism ever born of so cold a parent as reason? Has common sense ever created a nation? Is material self-interest a sufficient sanction for sentimental self-sacrifice? asked the sceptics. Yet, they added, it is on this feeble and untried foundation that the Young Turks endeavour to build the tremendous demand that other races—and races superior to them in intellectual and spiritual qualities—shall barter their ancient ideals, their long-cherished memories of the past, their carefully nourished hopes for the future, to secure improved material conditions for the Ottoman Empire in a problematical to-morrow. This heroic venture of faith

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is asked, not from the strong, unreasoning impulse of feeling, but from the calculation of self-interest which, however enlightened, has hitherto always proved a dividing and disintegrating force.

Now, without wishing to minimise the weight of this abstract reasoning, I must point out that self-interest, whatever its value may be, is an asset distinctly on the Young Turk side. In what sense it is on their side and to what extent the Young Turks are likely to profit by it in the future can best be seen from the use they have made of it in the past.

CHAPTER VI

THE NATIONALITIES AND THE YOUNG TURKS

WHEN the Young Turks addressed their patriotic appeal to their non-Turkish fellow-countrymen in July, 1908, they found the minds of the latter prepared to receive it more than favourably. All the inhabitants of the Empire—except the privileged few who prospered at the expense of the many—had suffered so severely from the evils of absolutism that they were sincerely glad to co-operate in the establishment of better conditions. No other alternative than the Young Turk programme was open to any of them. The Arabs, Kurds, and Albanians had never yet formulated any positive nationalist policy, as distinct from a negative and desultory opposition to the Ottoman Government. The Armenians had been taught by bitter experience that they could neither achieve national rehabilitation by their own efforts nor hope for any practical help from the platonic sympathy of the West. All that they could reasonably expect to gain by a dissolution of the Ottoman Empire was an exchange of the Turkish for the Russian yoke; and that did not seem to them a prospect of overwhelming attractiveness. The Armenian revolutionary committees, therefore, hastened to make

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common cause with the Young Turks, frankly expressing the conviction that the salvation of their nationality lay in the integrity and reform of the common fatherland. The Bulgars, who had for years been striving with great energy and no scruple for the absorption of Macedonia, lost all immediate chance of success as soon as the Powers on whose assistance they counted pronounced in favour of Constitutional Turkey. The Government at Sofia showed its usual shrewdness by backing the general favourite, and while the Central Organisation was adopting a cleverly opportunist attitude towards the Young Turks, the Internal Organisation in Macedonia itself, controlled by the notorious brigand Sandansky and his worthy lieutenant Panitza—both of whom, after the murder of their former chief Sarafoff, had been outlawed from Bulgaria—pursued an equally opportunist, though quite independent, policy. In brief, all the doctors of Bulgarian diplomacy, for one reason or another, found it profitable to postpone the realisation of their ambitious dream till more propitious times and meanwhile to cultivate the friendship of the new powers that had so suddenly arisen in Turkey. The Serbs, whose propaganda in Macedonia had never advanced much further than the stage of a pious aspiration, and the Roumanians, whose propaganda in the same field had never been much more than an impudent and futile fraud, were similarly grateful for the respite offered to them by the Young Turk experiment. As to the Greeks, their militant agitation in Macedonia had always had for its object self-preservation rather than conquest. It was begun for the defence of the Greek

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and Grecophil populations, which had long been terrorised by the Bulgarian bands, and as soon as the Young Turks put an end to Bulgarian terrorism it ceased to have any reason for existing. The Greeks, therefore, hastened to abandon their agitation and to acclaim the Young Turks as the harbingers of conditions of peace, security, and fair play.

But the Hellenic, unlike the Bulgarian and Servian, interests extend far beyond the limits of Macedonia. According to the latest compilation, which I will quote for its guide-book-like impartiality, "The Greeks constitute not only the most numerous but the most intelligent people in the Ottoman Empire. They are more numerous than the Turks in European Turkey; they form one-fifth of the population of Constantinople and one-half of that of Smyrna; they constitute the element of greatest wealth and commercial power in the coast towns of both European and Asiatic Turkey; in Asia Minor they are most numerous in the *vilayets* of Trebizond and Aidin and the district of Karaman; in such islands as Rhodes, Mitylene, Cyprus, and Crete they form the backbone of the population; and everywhere, in both commerce and agriculture, they are more intelligent and more enterprising than the Turks. Both physically and mentally they are the most active element of the mixed Ottoman Empire. The historic sense is strong in them, and they have great love for education and learning. In Turkey they maintain more than 2,000 elementary and secondary schools for the education of Greek children."¹

¹ W. S. Monroe, *Turkey and the Turks*, 1908, pp. 80-82. As a matter of fact, there are, according to official statistics, in the Ottoman Empire 4,211 Greek schools, attended by 270,423 pupils of both sexes.

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It was natural that a race which by virtue of its numbers, its wealth, its superior civilisation, its commercial and industrial enterprise, and its historic prestige forms by far the most powerful Christian element in the Ottoman State should have cherished the hope of recovering Constantinople from the Turk and of reviving the Byzantine Empire. The memory of the great past had never died out in the Greek mind. It was kept alive by education and oral tradition. Despite the efforts made by a jealous but inefficient despotism to stifle national aspirations, Greek children were taught history in the schools, and the crowds in the streets treasured many popular ballads dealing with the heroic tale of the fall of Constantinople and of its last gallant Emperor. Tuesday—the day of the capture—remained a day of evil omen to the Greek masses. Moreover, as if these intangible records were not sufficient, the whole of Turkey is full of old Greek churches converted into mosques and of other solid reminders of the times when the Greek bore sway over those lands. In the capital itself the Greeks have a magnificent concrete memorial to their sad and glorious past in the cathedral of St. Sophia. To this day the Greek populace of Constantinople clings to a legend which encourages the expectation of a day when a Greek Patriarch will again officiate in the famous Byzantine church. It is related that just before the conquest of the city a Greek priest was celebrating morning service before the altar. Suddenly the Janissaries broke into the sanctuary. The wall behind the altar miraculously opened wide. The priest with the sacred chalice vanished into the gap and the wall

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closed again. That priest will come forth out of his hiding-place, chalice in hand, on the day when a Greek Emperor will once more reign in Constantinople, and will continue the Mass interrupted four hundred and fifty years ago.

A similar belief, curiously enough, is held by the Turks themselves. In Constantinople there is a sacred spring containing some fish, brown on one side and white on the other. According to popular tradition, those fish were being fried by an old woman when her operation was interrupted by the entry of the Turks. The fish, already half fried, revived and jumped into the water, where they remain to the present hour, refusing to be caught until the city is recovered by the Greeks. The spring is holy to the Mohammedans as to the Christians, and on the name-day of the saint to whom it is dedicated crowds belonging to both creeds participate in the ceremony and devoutly bathe in the waters, to which are attributed healing powers. Again, near the Veffa Mosque, in a courtyard surrounded by the humble dwellings of the poor, there flourishes an ancient willow-tree, beautiful with a wealth of wild roses and vines encircling its branches. Beneath that tree there is a grave covered by a slab of white marble. There is no inscription on the slab, but an oil lamp is lit every evening over its head by the *hodja* of the neighbouring mosque, who, if you ask him, will inform you that the grave he tends so piously conceals the remains of the last Greek Emperor.

However, it is as easy to over-rate as it is to under-rate the practical strength of sentiment as a political force. Although both Greeks and Turks preserve a

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vivid recollection of the past, that recollection is utterly devoid of bitterness. In normal circumstances the victors and the vanquished live on terms of mutual forbearance. The Greek recognises in the Turk a conqueror and the Turk respects in the Greek a descendant of the "royal nation" which he subdued in fair fight. Time, the great Destroyer, has done his work. As you go round the walls that witnessed the last deadly struggle between the Greek and the Turk you see the grassy moat which once flowed red with their blood now red with the bloom of innumerable poppies. And in the ruined ramparts above, where Greek and Turk four and a half centuries ago slew each other, their descendants picnic side by side. Everywhere, on stone and man alike, you watch and bless the merciful hand of the great Destroyer, which sheds beauty over ashes, which administers to wounded hearts the balm called oblivion, which heals by killing either the patient or the thing that caused the pain.

That the Hellenes of Turkey, like the Hellenes of every other part of the world, turn affectionate eyes to the Hellenic kingdom is, of course, a fact as indisputable as it is intelligible. In Constantinople you will find the blue and white flag floating side by side with the red and white over every Greek shop. On the walls of the houses you will see the words "Hellas" and "Athens" scrawled in charcoal by the sprawling hands of exuberant schoolboys. On the name-day of King George the church in which the customary *Te Deum* is celebrated overflows with a Greek congregation and the street outside the Hellenic Legation,

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where a reception is held after Mass, is packed with a cheering multitude.

But, for all that, an investigation beneath the surface yields the conviction that the Greek's Great Idea at the present day is like the modern Jew's idea of the Messiah—a dream rather than an expectation. The Greeks are shrewd enough to distinguish between dreams and realities, and while cultivating the one do not lose sight of the other. Since other nationalities—notably the Bulgarian—arose in the Balkan Peninsula and began to divert from the Greeks the self-interested sympathies of Europe, the Great Idea of the Greeks underwent considerable modifications. They perceived that they could no longer hope to restore the Byzantine Empire. The Turk, though sick, did not seem inclined to die, and when he died there were others to dispute with them his inheritance. The events of the last few decades have revealed to all thoughtful Greeks not only the immense difficulties that stand in the way of their Idea's realisation, but also the fact that the Turk is far less dangerous an enemy of Hellenism than the Bulgar or the Slav. If any doubts on the point still lingered they were ruthlessly dispelled by the horrible persecution of the Greek element by the Bulgars, both in Macedonia and in Bulgaria, whence in 1906 whole Greek communities were compelled to flee, leaving their ancient homes heaps of smoking ruins. These events had a profound effect on the Greek mind. Even before the establishment of the Constitution in Turkey there were Greeks who saw nothing more shocking in an alliance with the Turk than did their ancestors in the days of Frank aggression, when an

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alliance with the Sultan was considered the only means of escape from the Pope. Time was when a Greek prince did not disdain to give his daughter in marriage to a Turkish emir, and when a Christian princess was married to her Mohammedan husband with no protest even from the clergy. In those days the Frank was the enemy in the same sense as is now the Bulgar—an enemy that aimed at the subjugation of the Greek soul and body, whereas the Turk, even at his worst, if he starved the body, spared the soul.

After the proclamation of liberty in Turkey the Greek wish for a cordial understanding with the Turk was strengthened by more positive considerations. Liberty meant the advent of an era more favourable to the material progress and moral development of the numerous Greek element under Turkish rule, and, once such an era was established, that element felt assured that it could, through sheer intellectual superiority, hold more than its own in the struggle for existence. For all these reasons the Greek was genuinely anxious to assist the Young Turks in staving off the peril from the north, which appeared imminent on the eve of the Revolution, and in maintaining the Turkish rule, always provided that that rule became respectable and respected his own nationality. If these two conditions were fulfilled, the Greek was prepared to relegate the fulfilment of his dream to the Greek calends. A few months ago one of the numerous Greek newspapers published in Turkey wrote : "The Greek Great Idea is not a political programme but an ideal—an ideal of culture. The Turks have no cause to be afraid of it. On the contrary, if they honestly desire the equality and

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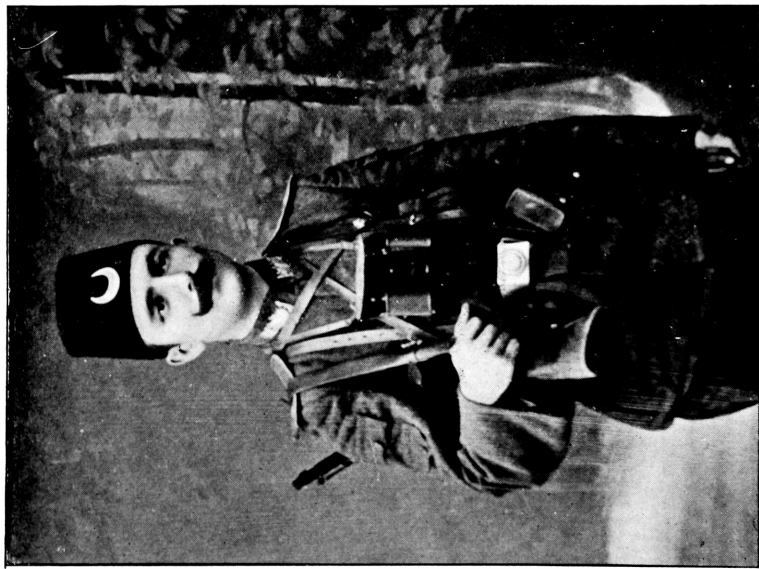
prosperity of all the races that inhabit the Ottoman Empire, they must welcome it as an ally. By supporting the Greek nationality they will strengthen the Greek's love for a country in which his Idea is allowed free scope for the fulfilment of its civilising mission. If, however, they have other designs, if they prove unable to conform with the progressive spirit of the age, then they will have very good cause to fear the Greek Idea and fight against it. But in that case they may be sure that they will be dooming themselves, for they will be opposing not a nation but a natural law—the law of human progress. Others will come to profit by the Greek Idea, for, though the Turks may go, progress will go on."

This declaration is in perfect harmony with the utterances of all representatives of Greek public opinion that I have come into contact with. From the Œcumenical Patriarch of Constantinople—the venerable and wise Joachim III.—the head of the Greek nation in Turkey, and from King George, the head of the Greek nation in Greece, down to the ordinary tradesman, I have hardly met a Greek who has not clearly realised that the maintenance of the Ottoman Empire is indispensable for the future of Hellenism, and who has not told me that his wish is to live on the best of terms with the Turk. A gentleman holding an important diplomatic post under the Hellenic crown put the case to me in these terms : "The Great Idea, in its political sense, is impracticable for the present and will indefinitely remain so. Why then should we Greeks, whether of the Hellenic Kingdom or of the Ottoman Empire, quarrel with the Turk? Why should we object to living under a

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Turkish sovereign in Turkey as we live under a Danish sovereign in Greece? All that we ask from the Young Turks is not to interfere with our national language and customs. If our nationality is left unmolested and Turkey means honestly to reform, we shall be able by our industry and intelligence, peacefully and normally, to conquer in the East the intellectual and material position to which we consider ourselves entitled."

This exposition of the attitude maintained by the non-Turkish elements brings into relief at once the strength of an appeal to self-interest and its limitations. All the elements are willing, in various degrees, to co-operate in the transformation of the Ottoman Empire into a vigorous modern State; not one of them is prepared to countenance its transformation into a coherent nation. They are all patriots, but they interpret their patriotism in a different way from that of the Young Turks. They regard the Empire as a common inheritance, but even if they do not ultimately wish to see it resolved into self-governing States, they wish to see it permanently established as an aggregate of self-governing communities. They cannot look upon it as a homogeneous entity, which it never was and never can be. Their ideal, at most, is a well-governed and powerful Empire, which, while protecting them all against aggression from outside or from each other, shall enable each of them to continue developing its sense of national individuality. Their patriotism, while based upon the love of each for the common fatherland, breeds in each a clear determination to control its own private affairs. It is the patriotism of the parish pump, but not, on that account, less



ENVER BEY, A HERO OF THE TURKISH REVOLUTION.



KIAMIL PASHA.

(See page 133).

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real or more parochial than is the patriotism of the Young Turks. For what the Young Turks mean by fusion into an Ottoman nation is that the other elements should be fused into their own crucible. They are no more prepared to sacrifice their nationalism to that of the others than the others are prepared to sacrifice theirs to that of the Turks. Each community adheres to its own parish pump, and feels the utmost reluctance to exchange that idol for the pump of the Turk simply because the latter happens to be bigger.

The feeling of reluctance is especially vigorous among the Christian communities, not only because they are the best educated and most highly developed of all, but also because in their case the parish pump is reinforced by the village steeple. The existence of that steeple was precisely the origin of that semi-autonomy they have enjoyed so long. That arrangement, dictated, as has been shown, by the same reasons of equity and policy which have induced Christian Powers—like England, France, Russia, and Austria—to grant analogous privileges, as regards social and religious matters, to their Mohammedan subjects, is unavoidable so long as the Mohammedan regulates his life by the Koran and the Christian by the Gospel; and, despite periodical attempts at interference made by the Porte, it was generally respected so long as the Ottoman polity was avowedly based upon the principle of Mohammedan supremacy and exclusiveness. The *rayahs*, having nothing to do with the government of the Empire, except to contribute to its finances, might very well be left to conduct their private affairs as seemed best to them.

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The Turk dreamed no more of inquiring into the marriage customs of his Christian subjects than of inquiring into the marriage customs of his cattle. But, as soon as the fundamental principle of the Ottoman polity was superseded by that of constitutional equality, it was natural that a question should arise concerning the relations of the various *millet*s towards the central Government. Of this important question—known as the Question of the Privileges—much has already been heard by those who have taken the trouble to study the real meaning of recent events in Turkey, and much more will be heard in the future. Officially it has not yet been brought before the Ottoman Parliament—for responsible Ottoman statesmen are too well aware of its delicacy and its dangers. But, thanks partly to the natural nervousness of the Christians concerning a matter that affects them so deeply, partly to the indiscretions of unofficial Young Turks, the problem has been discussed in the polyglot Press of the Ottoman Empire so frequently and so fully that it is easy to form a clear idea of the issues involved.

CHAPTER VII

LIBERTY LIMITED

As regards religion pure and simple, the Young Turks have always disclaimed any intention of departing from the tolerant policy pursued by the Old Turks. Nor is there the slightest ground for doubting the sincerity of the disclaimer. The days of religious proselytism are over. The Young Turks have grasped the modern maxim that religion is one thing and politics another. Therefore, they have only expressed the wish to bring the judicial and educational institutions of the non-Turkish communities under State control. Now, this sounds a perfectly rational demand, and it would be so if the Ottoman Empire was inhabited by people professing the same creed. As it is, a suppression of the ecclesiastical courts would imply the trial of cases intimately connected with the religious and social customs of the parties concerned by judges brought up on different religious and social standards. For example, polygamy, or even bigamy, which is a crime in the eyes of a Christian judge, is a perfectly legitimate act in the eyes of his Mohammedan colleague. And from this single fountain of marriage flows a multitude of legal problems—problems of legitimacy of children, of in-

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heritance, of the maintenance of wives, and so forth. Not less open to objection is the demand concerning instruction. The educational problem would be a thorny one even if the Ottoman Empire were inhabited by people speaking the same language and inheriting the same national traditions. We see even in the England of to-day how important a part mere differences of religious opinion play in the instruction of the young. In Turkey the problem is further complicated by differences of language, of historic tradition, and of national feeling—all possessions to which the Christian communities cling passionately. All those communities, and especially the Greek, boast a highly developed system of national education which has cost them generations of labour and millions of money, and which is even more precious to them than political liberty. They have no objection to the use of Turkish as an official language, nor have they any objection to the study of Turkish as a subsidiary language in their establishments of secondary and higher education—as a matter of fact, Turkish has long been so taught in those establishments—but, on the other hand, they have no wish to exchange their own language and literature for the language and literature of the Turks. The mere hope that the Greeks would consent to abandon the tongue of Homer and Plato for that of Djevdet Pasha or Kemal Bey sounds preposterous, and bespeaks in those who entertain it a rare measure of *naïveté*. There is within the Ottoman Empire no race more justly proud of its descent, more tenacious of its especial institutions, more wedded to its past, than the Hellenic. If the Hellenes are ready to help in

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the regeneration of the Ottoman Empire it is, as we saw, because they regard the maintenance of that Empire as the salvation of their language, their freedom, their institutions, and everything they value dear as life. A similar tenacity is displayed by the Bulgars, the Serbs, and the Armenians, and even by the Arabs and the Albanians.

These last-mentioned races, although professing the same creed, have no desire to share the same culture with the Turks. The Arabs boast a language which is the sacred language and a literature which is the classical literature of Islam. The Turkish tongue derives its noblest elements from the Arabic, and Turkish literature is only now coming into birth. So far from wishing to exchange their own for the speech of the Turks, the Arabs are loudly protesting against the official pre-eminence which the latter arrogates to itself in the Ottoman Empire. "Why should Turkish be the official language," they say, "when we form so considerable a portion of the Moslem population of the Empire, and, moreover, speak the language in which the holy books of our common faith are written?"

The Albanians, who until recent years had remained in a state of primitive illiteracy, are—especially the Albanians of the south—now actively endeavouring to raise their speech to the dignity of a literary idiom, and have long demanded that it should be recognised as the medium of instruction in the Albanian schools—a recognition the denial of which by the old *régime* had done more than anything else to alienate the Albanian nationalists from Abdul Hamid, to neutralise all the favours by which he

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strove to earn their loyalty, and to throw them into the arms of the revolutionary party; thereby contributing not a little to its triumph.

One can, therefore, easily understand the feelings of alarm and resentment aroused in all these non-Turkish communities by the publication, on September 23, 1908, of the political programme of the Committee of Union and Progress, which contained the following article :—

“All schools shall be placed under State control. Mixed Government schools shall be opened to all elements of the population with the object of giving to all Ottoman subjects a uniform educational system. Turkish shall be an obligatory subject in the primary schools. The Government primary schools shall prepare pupils for secondary and higher education with Turkish as the medium of instruction.”

Closely related to the question of education is that of military service. Hitherto fighting was a duty and a prerogative confined to the Mohammedans, and of the Mohammedans themselves the Arabs and the Albanians had never submitted to regular conscription, while the Christians were exempted altogether from a career that involved the possession of arms—that is, of the means of self-liberation. With the establishment of the Constitution all this had to be changed. The Young Turks considered, justly, that equal rights entail equal burdens. The Christians, on their part, did not fail to perceive that under the guise of a burden they were really gaining a privilege. For it was obvious that their social and political inferiority in the past was chiefly due to their want of the means of self-defence. Of sentimental objections

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to bearing arms under the banner of the Prophet they had few or none. Long ago, in the fourteenth century, a corps of cavalry and infantry, recruited from among the warlike Greek mountaineers of Bithynia, had fought under the banner of the Sultan Orkhan. On the Turkish side, too, there were many precedents for the extension to the Christians of the right of arms. Christian troops were occasionally enlisted by the earlier Ottoman Sultans in their wars against the Seljuk emirs of Asia Minor. After the invasion of the Balkan Peninsula also, Christian contingents of Servia and Albania were constantly to be found in the Ottoman armies, while even in much later times Christian men-at-arms were employed for the maintenance of order in the mountain districts of Macedonia, Epirus, and Greece, and in quite recent days Christian gendarmes were similarly employed for the protection of the unarmed Christian populations against the depredations of Turkish irregulars or for the collection of taxes.

But the Christians, while professing their readiness to serve in the Ottoman army, demanded that the army should first be so reformed as to render service tolerable. Under existing conditions the recruits are kept with the colours as long as it pleases the Government to keep them, their pay is extremely meagre and always in arrear, no attempt is made in distributing them over the Empire to take into account their peculiar aptitudes—highlanders are sent to serve on board ships and islanders on the mountains—nor are their interests and feelings consulted in any other way. Thousands of peasants are annually torn from their villages at sowing and harvest time and are

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despatched for an indefinite period to the distant frontiers of the Empire, leaving their fields untilled and their families unprotected. These hardships had grown so intolerable of late years that even the Anatolian recruits—models of patience—were often driven to rebellion. It was a clever exploitation of these conditions that had enabled the Young Turks to enlist the co-operation of the army in their struggle with despotism. The Christians could not be expected to submit to conditions which had compelled even the Mohammedans to forget their instinctive allegiance to the Commander of the Faithful.

But this is not all. The enlistment of Christians raises many special questions due to differences of culture, language, creed, and custom. The Christian soldiers would require Christian officers able to understand them, would require Christian priests to minister to their religious needs, would require to be allowed to observe their fasts and feasts, which do not coincide with those of their neighbours. Further, measures would have to be taken not to place the Christian soldiers at the mercy of their Mohammedan comrades, as happened a few years ago in the farcical experiment made to enlist Christians in the Macedonian Gendarmerie. The Christians, taking all these things into account, stipulated that the contingents furnished by them should be in the same numerical proportion as those contributed by the Mohammedan elements, that they should be given a fair proportion of officers, and that they should be enrolled into separate regiments, each to serve only in the district where it was recruited. As regards the proportion of men and officers, the young Turks appeared willing to comply.

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"We want a national army," declared a prominent member of the Committee of Union and Progress, "not an army representative of Mohammedan ascendancy." Again, during my stay in Constantinople, the chief military authority assured his Holiness the Œcumenical Patriarch that the Christians, according to official calculations, would in the future form a quarter of the whole Ottoman army, and that they would be admitted into the police and the gendarmerie, provided they showed some knowledge of Turkish. A school, he said, would be founded for that purpose for the instruction of Christians and Mohammedans alike. About the same time the Minister of War announced that all graduates of non-Mohammedan colleges would be admitted to the higher military schools of the Empire, while in the preparatory military schools also non-Mohammedan boys would be received on the same terms as Mohammedan boys.

But the demand for enrolment into separate regiments, to serve in the districts to which they belong, has been pronounced incompatible with the Young Turks' programme. If the main object of their efforts, they said, is the preservation of the Empire from disruption, the worst possible means for the attainment of that object would be the creation in the various provinces of homogeneous standing forces which might at any time join their brethren across the frontier in rebellion. This, it must be confessed, is a perfectly reasonable objection from the Turkish point of view. But it is not on that account any more palatable to the Christians.

It is true that Christian volunteers have begun to join the ranks. While I was in Constantinople last

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May a body of thirty Armenian youths were drilled by an adjutant-major, and after three hours' exercise were led through the streets by the officer with a band of music, an Armenian priest delivering a patriotic address in Turkish, to the great joy of the Mohammedan populace. But, for all that, the fear of absorption with which the Christians contemplate the barracks is a reality. They see in the attitude of the Young Turks towards conscription, as towards education, an insidious attempt at undermining their national distinctions and at merging them into the ocean of Ottoman nationalism. The barracks, they say, are intended to complete the assimilation begun by the schools. What the Turks mean by a "national army" is an army in which the Greek, the Armenian, the Bulgar, and the Serb will be ultimately swamped by the Turk.

The Young Turks have done nothing to dispel this fear. Long before the Revolution those of them who planned and plotted in exile for the overthrow of despotism had given rise to the suspicion that their real object was not to liberate but to absorb their Christian fellow-subjects. One of the leaders of the Paris Committee some years ago publicly declared that the aim of his party was to bring about the fusion of the various elements into one Ottoman nation after the pattern of the French and German. A few months after the Revolution no less a person than Hilmi Pasha, in the course of a conversation with a Bulgarian publicist, said, "Our policy will be frankly national. We know neither Greeks, Bulgars, nor Albanians, but only Ottomans. The question of the privileges of various Churches is merely one

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of religious tolerance"—utterances which aroused among the Bulgars, not without reason, serious apprehensions, and confirmed the general suspicion that the true aim of Turkish patriots was the obliteration of the other nationalities. Thus, from the Christian point of view, "fraternity," when examined closely, reveals itself as "fusion," and fusion is but a new name for an old friend—conversion—only it appears now under a nationalist instead of a religious garb. In past times the Turks, realising their intellectual inferiority, were in the habit of levying on their Christian subjects a human tribute—a tithe of children which, brought up in the faith of Islam, served to defend the Empire in war and to administer it in peace. The fame of the Janissaries is still alive. But it is not so vividly recalled that out of the first forty-eight Grand Viziers whom Turkey had after the conquest of Constantinople, thirty-six were Christian converts, and that a distinguished Turk was disqualified for the highest post in the Turkish Government simply because he was born a Turk. The Sultans preferred to have round them individuals free from all other ties and attached entirely to their own persons. Thus the *rayahs* were doomed to labour and procreate, and while Christian industry filled the imperial coffers, Christian blood and brains were used for the expansion and administration of the Empire as well as for the consolidation of the sovereign's arbitrary rule. It would seem, say the Christians, that the Young Turks have a similar end in view, only they try to reach it by a different route. They endeavour by education and conscription to achieve what oppression had failed

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in—the submersion of all the races into the Ottoman ocean.

Whether this foreboding is well-founded or not, the future will show. Meanwhile, it is fairly plain that fusion is a policy as dangerous as it is fatuous. The analogy between Turkey and France or Germany that the Young Turks are so fond of is due to a singularly unintelligent fallacy. The homogeneity of those two nations is the outcome of historic conditions which have never existed, and are never likely to exist, in the Sultan's dominions. It may, or may not, be that the amalgamation of the subject races was practicable at the time of the conquest, when the Turks were omnipotent and the subject races exhausted. Now it is far too late for such an experiment. For generations past, and more particularly during the latter half of the nineteenth century, the national consciousness of the conquered peoples has been developing rapidly. Education has served as light given to the slave : it has enabled him not only to see his misery, but also to see himself. The sooner the Young Turks realise the impossibility of the theory of an Ottoman nationality and a common language, the better for them and their Empire. If they fail to realise this fact they will inevitably forfeit the sympathy which they earned by their liberal professions. An "Ottoman nation," however closely united it may become, must, for good or evil, continue to include such diverse constituents as Turk, Greek, Serb, Bulgar, Armenian, Albanian, Arab, Kurd. The only way to secure the sincere loyalty of these diverse elements is by respecting their diversities.

These elements can only be drawn towards Young

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Turkey if they find in it not any limitation of individual existence, but the best means by which the development of each on its own lines can be secured. The belief of each community in its own way of life, the devotion of each to its own horizon of thought, are not the enemy, but rather the very life, of the wider patriotism which looks for its symbol to the Ottoman flag. The Ottoman Empire in this respect presents a curious analogy to the British. We have succeeded in conciliating such diverse elements as the French in Canada and the Dutch in South Africa by scrupulously respecting their diversities. But if the Young Turks find the British example too distant to copy, they have another much nearer to them. Their model, in dealing with these national problems, should be, not France or Germany, but Austria. That model, I know, does not appeal to the Young Turks' imagination. "It is unbelievable," said one of them the other day, "that we should be seriously called upon to establish a House of Representatives which should consciously imitate the worst features of the Austrian and Hungarian houses." But they could do much worse than imitate those houses. The Austro-Hungarian, like the Ottoman Empire, embraces a multitude of races. At one time the Hapsburgs strove to fuse those races into one German nation, and the result was a civil warfare, the memory of which still poisons the internal relations of the Dual Monarchy. During the present reign the programme of assimilation has been in a large measure exchanged for one of conciliation, and the result is a strong Austro-Hungarian power, founded upon unity of interests, not upon homogeneity of institutions. It

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may not be an ideal result, but it is the nearest approach to the ideal that the existing conditions permit. The Young Turks would do well to ponder carefully and soberly the lesson offered by their neighbour, and by avoiding her earlier errors to emulate her late comparative success. No other safe way is open to them. Those whom Heaven has divided man cannot unite.

Now, supposing the Young Turks are brought to see the futility of the fusion theory, to what extent are they disposed to act on the principle of equality? The ordinary Turk in the past had given ample proofs of his profound inability to treat as equals people whom he had been brought up to regard as inferiors. For centuries his attitude towards the *rayah* was exactly the same as his attitude towards his cattle. He referred to both as a "deposit" (*amanet*) entrusted to him by Allah, and for the use of which he was answerable to none but Allah. From both he expected dumb docility, and so long as he obtained it he made an excellent master according to his lights—kind, just, and indulgent, if unintelligent. It was only when the Christian subject tried to assert himself in any way that he was cruelly reminded of his place in the system of things.

Even enlightened Turks—men who before the Revolution had the courage to declare themselves uncompromising partisans of radical reform—shared this conception, though they expressed it in less crude terms. The representative of an English journal in Constantinople some two years ago depicted the mental attitude of these reformers as follows: "The supremacy of Islam must be maintained. All Turks,

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even the most bitter opponents of Hamidianism, insist on this as a *sine qua non*. They are willing to admit Christians to all departments of the State in proportion to their number, and to admit them to the army, to the navy, and to the police or gendarmerie. But the ruling race must hold the upper hand. This is the mere instinct of self-preservation. The Turk, like the Indian Moslem, is beginning to feel his inferiority to other races, despite his avowed belief in the superiority of his creed. The travelled and educated Turks are keenly alive to this. The Turk feels that if he placed the Christian, who is quicker to absorb modern ideas, on the same plane as himself, in a few short years all departments of the State would be filled by Christians. In a decade every office would be filled with Armenians, Greeks, or Jews, to the entire exclusion of the Turk, and if a certain number of posts were reserved for the Turks their educational inferiority would be at once apparent. When one advances the plea for equality of race even to the most advanced Turk he at once retorts : 'Show me a country in the world where the conquered race is on the same plane as the conquerors! Is it so in India? It is true that before your law all men are equal and that the oath of each, whether conquered or conqueror, has a like value. So should it be with us, and theoretically it is so. When the judiciary is purged of its present occupants and filled with men versed in law other than that of the Sheri, we, too, shall arrive at the same state.' "

Now, this view describes, I think, candidly and accurately the limits of the equality which the Turk was formerly prepared to concede to the Christian

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racés. Has the Revolution broadened those limits? The authors of that Revolution, it is true, have repeatedly and solemnly proclaimed their intention to base the new order of things on the principle of perfect equality, civil and political, of all Ottoman citizens. This intention has been expressed to the native Christians as well as to foreigners of every nationality by Young Turks of every description—military officers, ministers, members of Parliament, publicists, *ulemas*. The Sheikh-ul-Islam himself declared that the main object of the Constitution is to establish, in conformity with the teaching of the Koran, perfect liberty, justice, and equality for all. The subject races accepted these professions literally and joyfully, as the delirious enthusiasm with which they greeted the Constitution clearly showed. They looked upon the Revolution as a movement liberal in the broadest sense of the term. Since then, however, certain things have happened which have awakened the scepticism and cooled the enthusiasm of the subject races. The Revolution has gradually come to be regarded as liberal only in the sense that it intends to replace an effete despotism by an efficient administration. The conviction has been formed that in other respects the object of Turkish patriots is mainly nationalist, that the Young Turks aim, above all, at the regeneration of the Turkish element and the invigoration of its ascendancy at all costs, the Constitution being only a means towards that end, and that, in brief, the Turk means to remain master.

Among these disillusioning events the most significant was the manner in which the Committee of Union and Progress conducted the parliamentary elections.

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That manner offered an ominous parallel to the proceedings which led to the composition of Midhat Pasha's Parliament in 1876 and to its speedy decomposition. At that date, despite the similar declarations of Constitutional equality made by Turkish Liberals, many Christian constituencies had been compelled by the provincial authorities to return Mohammedan deputies, while those Christian candidates who succeeded in obtaining a seat either had to give in advance guarantees of their subservience to the Mohammedan majority or were made only too soon to realise that freedom of speech was not one of their privileges. It is possible that those tactics were not in accordance with the spirit of Midhat Pasha's programme, that Midhat's efforts to rehabilitate the *rayah* by lifting him to the Turk's level had found small favour even among his own followers, much less could they commend themselves to the masses of his compatriots. In any case, the result was a Parliament that could be described as Constitutional or liberal only in a Pickwickian sense. The Young Turks in 1908 had a splendid opportunity of showing that liberalism had made a genuine advance since 1876, by a thorough revision of the electoral system or at least by its interpretation in a more liberal spirit. They did not seize that opportunity.

CHAPTER VIII

A PARLIAMENTARY MACHINE IN THE MAKING

Nothing could be more peaceful, more promising, or more picturesque than the opening scenes of the electoral struggle in Turkey, and particularly in Constantinople, the city where the principal creeds and races of the Empire meet in their greatest multitudes. On the night before the Friday fixed for the commencement of the contest the big drums began to beat in the Mohammedan quarters of Stamboul. Their dull, heavy sound floated over the silence of the empty streets, reminding the electors to proceed to the polls early on the morrow, in the same way as they remind them night after night through the month of Ramazan to rise for a final feast ere the day breaks, during which no true believer may break his fast. The Christians had no need of a reminder. Electoral contests had for centuries been part of their communal life.

Long before the morning mists had lifted their curtain from the face of the Bosphorus, immense crowds, consisting of laymen and clergymen, of adults and school-children, all in holiday attire, might be seen defiling in every direction through the maze of the capital. There was vigorous waving of tiny flags,

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vociferous singing of patriotic songs, and abundant cheering for the Constitution. But the proceedings were disfigured by no hoarse cries, no drunken brawls, no oratorical recriminations, none of those manifestations of party spirit which form the accompaniment of similar demonstrations in the civilised West. The spectacle partook more of the character of a religious ceremony than of a popular jubilation. Each procession, preceded by a military band and escorted by a guard of honour, carried with the utmost solemnity the urns to the public buildings appointed for the voting—Turkish mosques, Greek and Armenian churches, Jewish synagogues. Yet, despite its religious colouring, the spectacle was free from any signs of religious rancour. All barriers seemed to have been levelled by one overwhelming feeling—mutual gratulation on the achievement of a common deliverance. At one point a Mohammedan and a Christian procession coalesced, and one was treated to the inspiring sight of a minister of the Prophet and a minister of Christ, each clad in his canonicals, marching hand in hand: it was a living symbol of the brotherhood of children. Similar symbols were to be seen in the provinces.

Alas! the brotherhood did not endure long, either in the capital or in the provinces. The Committee of Union and Progress could not afford to see the Christians gaining too many seats in the Chamber, and it could not afford to allow any secret wolves of Yildiz to creep into the fold disguised as Constitutional lambs. It had drawn up its plans of campaign accordingly. The old electoral law was a chaotic mass of rules framed with the object of giving to the

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executive a practically unlimited discretion in the selection of candidates, and of thus assuring to its favourites a preponderance in the electoral colleges and eventually in the House. The Committee, which controlled the executive, availed itself to the full of the vagueness of the law on behalf of its own nominees. Further, it did its best to prevent any coalition among the different Christian elements and to exploit their mutual jealousies to its own profit. Of all the Christian elements the Greek was the most numerous, the most energetic, the most thoroughly versed in electoral tactics, in one word, the most formidable rival. It was towards the weakening of that element, therefore, that the Committee directed its most systematic efforts. In Macedonia, where the struggle was chiefly a triangular combat of Greek-Bulgar-Turk, the desired end was sought by a partial combination between the Turkish and Bulgarian forces—that is, between the adherents of the Committee and the followers of Sandansky—an unholy alliance between the apostles of progress and avowed brigands already steeped in crime, dictated entirely by reasons of political expediency, but not calculated to enhance the reputation of the Committee in the eyes of impartial spectators. In Constantinople the same object was pursued by a combination between the Turkish and Armenian forces. The effect of these manœuvres became evident as soon as the polling began. The Greeks complained that, while the Turkish and Armenian electors were permitted by the authorities to vote as soon as they showed their certificates, they were treated like ticket-of-leave men reporting themselves to the police. They were subjected to

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endless cross-examinations as to their age, business, and qualifications, the accuracy of their replies was disputed, and the validity of their certificates was denied. So, under one pretext or another, many of them were excluded from the polls. The Turks retorted that the Greeks went to the polls determined to vote whether they possessed the necessary qualifications or not, and that their certificates were not always in order. The truth seems to be that both sides were to blame, though in what proportion it is, of course, impossible to say. Perhaps some of the irregularities of which the Greeks complained were due to inexperience on the part of the Turkish authorities rather than to deliberate injustice. Perhaps the Turkish authorities thought it necessary to exercise a more strict supervision over the Greek voters than over the others, because the Greeks, being far better acquainted with the intricacies of elections, were less unlikely to resort to tricks. Perhaps, owing to his intensely democratic and touchy temperament, the Greek was prone to over-rate rather than to overlook any attempts at interference with his rights: it was noted that when an elector of another race was forbidden to register his vote, he went away quietly, whereas a Greek in like circumstances stayed to protest. Lastly, the vagueness of the electoral law must have given rise to a good many disputes, which were accentuated by tactlessness on both sides. In any case, the upshot was violent friction.

Meanwhile similar grievances were reported from the provinces. The Greeks of Thrace and Macedonia telegraphed to the Œcumenical Patriarch complaining of all sorts of illegalities committed by the Turkish

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officials with the assistance of armed Turkish peasants and Bulgarian *komitadjis*. From Epirus came the news that whole communities were arbitrarily excluded from the polls. In one instance no fewer than twenty thousand farmers of the district of Yannina were disqualified, and so flagrant was the injustice that the Government had afterwards to admit their right to vote. It was stated that many constituencies were so split up and grouped as to give to the Mohammedan vote an artificial preponderance. In several places elections were annulled by the local authorities for no other reason than that they had resulted in a Christian victory. Numerous examples were quoted of violent coercion. Ballot-boxes were tampered with, or even thrown into the water, voters were maltreated and imprisoned, or even forced to abstain from recording their votes by threats of massacre. In one part of Anatolia the elections to the municipal council ended in the return of eight Christians and only two Mohammedans, although the Mohammedan population was nearly twice as numerous as the Christian. The result, though due simply to the fact that the Christians had voted solid, while the Mohammedans had divided their votes, roused the wrath of the latter, and serious trouble was only averted by the tactful resignation of five of the Christian members. So firmly determined was the Committee to secure the victory by hook or by crook that at Adrianople the mayor—himself a Turk—was forced to resign on the ground that an attempt had been made to falsify the returns; but really because it was found that his election and that of two Greeks led to the exclusion of the Committee's nominees.

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Of course, it must not be supposed that the Christians submitted to these proceedings tamely. At Smyrna, where the Greek element is paramount, the Committee's action provoked sanguinary riots, in which at least one person was killed and several wounded. Soldiers with fixed bayonets had to be employed to clear the streets, and the unarmed citizens sought refuge in the churches. Matters reached a crisis when thirty thousand Greek villagers from the environs entered the city armed and were only prevailed upon to disperse by the promise that two Greek deputies should be elected, notwithstanding the nominal result of the poll, in which one of the Greek candidates was defeated by one vote. Thus a city inhabited by more than a hundred thousand Greeks barely managed to return two Greek deputies, while the forty thousand Turks easily secured two for themselves, and the return of the second Greek had to be carried by an appeal to arms. In other places, again, the Christians, on finding that the old reign of force had not been abolished, resorted in self-defence to the old methods of fraud. I came across a comic example of this phase of the elections in the Macedonian district of Langaza. In that district the Turks outnumber the Greeks, yet the latter contrived to outmanœuvre them through a stratagem due to the ingenuity of one of their compatriots. This genuine descendant of Odysseus carefully spread a rumour to the effect that the successful candidate would enjoy £T.10 a month for life. The honest Turks believed the story and each voted for himself. The Greeks, of course, paid no attention to it and voted solid. But such cases of retaliation were comparatively rare

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and, on the whole, there can be no doubt that the Christians were treated with gross unfairness.

These tactics compelled the Œcumenical Patriarch to lodge a vigorously worded protest with the Grand Vizier. After enumerating the main instances of violence committed, His Holiness went on to say : "All this clearly proves that the Constitution, so far from putting an end to the methods of persecution indulged in by the absolutist *régime*, has only systematised and perfected them," concluding with some very severe and outspoken animadversions on the programme adopted by the Committee and the Government. The terms in which the note was couched forced the Grand Vizier and the Young Turks to treat it seriously. On the following day a deputation from the Committee called at the Patriarchate armed with full powers to negotiate with the Greeks and give them satisfaction. The language of the plenipotentiaries was most conciliatory. They acknowledged that the Greek population ought to be represented in proportion to its numerical importance, and they promised that the elections which had been unjustly annulled should be validated or, where that was impossible, the Greeks should receive compensation elsewhere. A Greek Commission was elected to deal with the Young Turks, and a satisfactory agreement appeared certain, when suddenly the Committee went back on its word and refused to redeem its pledges. The result was a rupture.

The Greek Press called upon the Greeks to unite in defence of their rights. The Greeks answered like one man. The Greek shops of Constantinople were closed, the church bells summoned the people to

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assemble, and in a flash the streets of the capital were filled with an angry multitude. The agitation assumed such dimensions that the authorities had to take exceptional measures for the preservation of order. Troops were posted at strategic points and detachments of cavalry and infantry were told off to patrol the streets. Even the Minister of Police had to come forth on horseback and ride through the crowds, trying to mollify them with assurances that nothing was wrong with the elections. Presently the multitude was organised into a monster demonstration of some thirty thousand men and, led by several high ecclesiastics, marched with flags flying from Pera, over the Galata bridge, on to the Sublime Porte. The Grand Vizier endeavoured to pacify the indignant people with promises that their rights should be respected, but the people refused to be satisfied with vague promises.

The Greco-Turkish dispute had thus reached an acute stage, when the Armenians of Constantinople, who had at first acted in alliance with the Turks, on receiving reports that their brethren in Asia Minor were treated as the Greeks, proposed to the latter common action. As if this were not enough, now came news from the Adrianople *vilayet* also that the Bulgars, owing to analogous grievances, were refusing to participate in the elections. Responsible leaders of Turkish public opinion were forced to recognise that nothing was better calculated to wreck the prospects of Young Turkey than a breach with the Christians before the new edifice was consolidated. They realised that the success of their plans would be seriously imperilled if they allowed racial passions to

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be arrayed among the other disintegrating forces. They also possibly reflected that—to use the words of the Constantinople correspondent of *The Times*¹—“The commercial importance of the Ottoman Greek community, which has for centuries played an invaluable complementary rôle to the military and agricultural Moslem element, the ability and loyalty of the high Greek officials who have served the Porte as diplomatists and financiers since the conquest, the industry and enterprise of the mass of the Greek population, make the establishment of friendly relations between the Greek party and the Turkish Liberals of vital necessity to the Ottoman Empire.” Therefore, they made some tardy concessions to the Greeks and the other aggrieved Christians. The leaders of the latter, equally anxious to prevent the cleavage from growing wider, exerted all their influence in favour of a reconciliation. The disputants were persuaded to postpone their grievances until Parliament met, and meanwhile to resume the voting. Thus harmony was restored, but the disillusion of the non-Turks and their distrust, needless to say, did not die out.

These feelings, I have reason to know, are shared by all the Christian communities, though they are not declared by all with the same frankness. The Greeks, being the most impulsive, were the most bitterly disenchanted and the least careful to conceal their disenchantment. They told the Young Turks candidly what they thought of their “constitutional methods.” They told them that they simply did not know what constitutional government meant, and

¹ *The Times*, December 17, 1908.

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that, by doing their best to alienate their staunchest supporters, they betrayed their inability to understand even what their true interests were. A Greek shoemaker summed up the pessimism of his compatriots to me in a single homely aphorism: "The bear cannot learn dancing by itself, nor can the Turk teach himself constitutionalism. Both need a teacher."

The Armenians I found almost as outspoken as the Greeks. They complain that, notwithstanding the change of Government, they continue to be treated by the Young Turks with the same ignominy with which they were treated by the Old Turks. They had hailed the Constitution with greater joy than their Mohammedan fellow-countrymen, and yet the authors of that Constitution, instead of recognising in them sincere allies, appeared to look upon them as secret enemies. In brief, it seems as if the Turk by "equality" means that all the others should be equally inferior to himself; by "reciprocity" he understands the power of taking all he can and giving nothing in return. "By helping the Committee," they said, "we have helped to turn a moribund tyrant into a vigorous despot." The Young Turk's newly-awakened desire for self-assertion is accompanied by conceptions of competition that breathe all the spirit of the conqueror's insolence and contempt for mere law.

The Bulgars, more diplomatically minded than either the Greeks or the Armenians, swallowed their disappointment and continued to profess for the Committee an enthusiasm which, perhaps, they had never felt. They are practical men, the Bulgars; and so are the Young Turks. Why quarrel about principles?

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Why anticipate the future? Enough for the day the evil thereof. The two elements, therefore, despite the disagreeable experiences of the elections, have maintained a friendship founded on mutual opportunism. But when I asked a prominent Young Turk leader whether his party could rely on Bulgarian goodwill, he guardedly replied, "Yes—up to a certain point." Similarly from Bulgarian sources in Macedonia I gathered that the sentiment was reciprocated "up to a certain point."

The elections, then, revealed the forces of discord at work deep under the superficial symphony. They showed more clearly than any *a priori* argument could that the ideal of an Ottoman Fatherland in which the various communities shall live on terms of fraternal equality still is only an ideal. The idol of a larger patriotism set up by the Young Turks in the summer of 1908 was shattered by those same Young Turks in the ensuing autumn. The action of the Committee went far to discount the promises of impartiality by which its leaders had won the sympathy and support of their non-Turkish fellow-citizens. All that can be pleaded in extenuation of the strategy adopted by the Committee—for nothing can be said in its justification—is the principle of self-preservation. The Young Turks had to guard against two dangers: the danger of a triumph of the Christian over the Mohammedan elements, and the danger of an anti-Liberal reaction on the part of the Mohammedans themselves. Indeed, the two dangers are connected by something like a relation of cause and effect. It can hardly be disputed that in fair and free competition between Turk and non-Turk the former runs a grave risk of defeat.

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Despite his numerical superiority, he is less well equipped for a fight conducted on purely constitutional lines. Elections possess little meaning for the ordinary Turk, while to the Turkish peasant they are an impenetrable mystery. Years of slow instruction and experience must pass before the Mohammedan masses can begin to realise the value of a vote. Meanwhile their apathy and ignorance would give an inevitable and overwhelming advantage to the Christians, and especially to the Greeks and Armenians, whose natural aptitude for the things of the mind has for centuries been admirably trained by their democratic communal institutions. In other words, a freely elected Ottoman Parliament would have been very largely a Christian Parliament, and Turkey would have ceased to be an essentially Mohammedan Power. Now, the Young Turks, however liberal-minded they may be, are, after all, Turks, and Turkish supremacy is naturally dear to them. They felt that it was, after all, they, and not the Christians, who had done all the work, incurred all the perils, and established the Constitution. It is natural that they should have considered themselves entitled to the lion's share of the spoils. Besides—to come to the second danger—the Young Turks, no doubt, realised that they had still to reckon with the Old Turks—those conservative classes which, scarcely able to look upon a Christian as an equal, would have been stimulated to frenzy if they saw him gaining the upper hand in the government of the Empire. A contingency of this description would have supplied the latent reactionary forces with the very weapon for which they were waiting, and then

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the days of the Constitution would have been numbered.

These considerations are obviously of great weight, and the Committee could hardly have been expected to ignore them. But when all due allowance is made for them, the leaders of the constitutional cause should have borne in mind that a constitution has no meaning unless it is applied constitutionally. If they wish to maintain the predominance of the Turkish element, the only legitimate means of effecting their object is by raising the Mohammedan to the intellectual level of his Christian rival, not by arbitrarily fettering the Christian. They should devote themselves earnestly to the political education of the Turkish masses, and in the meantime they should scrupulously avoid offending the populations to which the Ottoman Empire looks chiefly for its political and economic regeneration. A good deal of friction and indignation might have been obviated if the Young Turks had taken the leaders of the Christian communities into their confidence and explained to them the grave reasons why the literal interpretation of electoral freedom was inadvisable. I am convinced, from what I heard in this connexion, that such an appeal to reason would not have been in vain; for the Christians have as much interest as the Young Turks to promote the Liberal *régime*, and would have been only too glad to avoid anything likely to compromise its stability. On the other hand, the Christians themselves might, without waiting to be told in as many words, have understood the difficulty of the position which confronted the Young Turks and made allowances for their conduct. As it is, owing to want of

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candour on both sides, it will need a long time, and an infinite expenditure of tact, to eradicate from the Christian mind the suspicion that the Constitution is nothing but a colossal farce.

The seed of alienation sown during the elections was fated to bear its fruit in the forthcoming Parliament. But for the moment the Committee had every reason to congratulate itself on its success. The vast majority of the Turks elected were its members or nominees. In Asia Minor, out of forty-five deputies returned by the five provinces, not more than two were Christians, while their relative numbers entitled them to at least six. In Europe a similar proportion was obtained. So that among the two hundred and seventy odd members who compose the Chamber there are scarcely fifty Christians—twenty-three Greeks, and the rest Armenians, Bulgars, Serbs, Kutzo-Vlachs. Even more conspicuous was the success of the Committee in the composition of the Senate. Out of its thirty-nine members, thirty are Mohammedans and seven Christians—three Greeks, two Armenians, one Bulgar, and one Kutzo-Vlach. Among the Mohammedans again the Turkish element is so preponderant that the Arabs bitterly resented the neglect of their own chiefs, only two of whom were deemed worthy of a place in the Upper House of the Ottoman Parliament. In other words, history has repeated itself. As in 1876, so in 1908, the representation of the non-Turkish races was reduced to the minimum compatible with decency. It is estimated that, had the elections been allowed to run their natural course, the Greeks, the Armenians, the Arabs, the Albanians, and the Bulgars

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would be represented by at least three times their actual number. As it is, they are represented just enough to prevent the Ottoman Parliament from being too obviously a purely Turkish Parliament, and to enable the Young Turks to say to the outside world, "Here you see, gentlemen, an Ottoman Parliament composed—in strict conformity with the liberal and enlightened principles which have earned for us your admiration and the confidence of our fellow-citizens—of all the elements in our Empire without distinction of creed or race!"

In the circumstances, it was easy to predict that the new Parliament would find it hard to escape the vicissitudes of its prototype. By failing to secure to every element representation proportionate to its numerical importance it missed that equilibrium which is the essential of efficiency, stability, and harmony. But these inherent defects were not immediately apparent to the Young Turks. No dismal forebodings came to mar the magnificence of the ceremony which inaugurated the revival of Constitutional Government in the square of St. Sophia. A certain delay occurred through the fear of assassination entertained by the Sultan, but at last the ceremony was fixed for December 17th, and Abdul Hamid was persuaded to grace it with his presence, braving the gratitude of his subjects. All the dignitaries of the State, the army, and the various Churches, all the ambassadors of foreign Courts, arrayed in their most gorgeous garments, assembled to do honour to the phenomenon, and the square of St. Sophia was filled with a vast multitude gathered together to welcome the era of liberty.

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There was only one disquieting feature in the picture. It was observed at the time that the most conspicuous element in the crowd was the military element: the famous khaki-clad men of the 3rd Army Corps from Macedonia to whom the Committee owed its triumph. These men of war seemed to be thoroughly conscious of the fact that the Constitution was their own work and the men of peace their inferiors. Although the feast was intended to celebrate the victory of democracy, Demos received but scant consideration at the hands of the soldiers. "Whenever the order was given to drive back the crowd," remarked one of the spectators, "the military ran like mad bulls at the nearest civilians and belaboured them mercilessly with the butt-ends of their muskets." No doubt, it was all done in the name of liberty, equality, and fraternity. Chastisement had before then been interpreted as a proof of love; and the populace was not in a mood to resent, protest, or analyse. Besides, who could question that the millennium was a reality when he heard the newsboys hawking manifestoes which called upon the deputies to begin their career by punishing the Sultan's fallen favourites and accomplices—the "ruffians of Yildiz, the scoundrels who sucked the people's blood for thirty-three years"? Clearly, the past was dead—long live liberty, equality, and fraternity!

Presently the Padishah himself appeared, crouching under the half-raised hood of his carriage and dashing through the multitudes for dear life. He alighted at the gate of the Parliament House, and, amid the reassuring cheers of the mob, the rattle of drums, the blare of bugles and the melodious strains of

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the Hamidian march, entered the hall—dazed, horror-stricken, bent, hesitating, tottering, his ashy face and shuffling step contrasting strangely with the domineering form of his hooked nose. He stood up in the Imperial box, leaning on his sword—a fallen autocrat painfully conscious of his fall. As he stood there, facing for the first time in his life a power greater than his own, Abdul Hamid looked like a prisoner in the dock rather than a ruler blessing his people. Yet bless it he did—awkwardly, nervously, vicariously—through a Speech from the Throne delivered in a nasal quavering voice by his first secretary. When the reading of the speech was over, an ancient green-robed *ulema* from Mecca lifted up his voice in prayer. The Sultan and all the others present raised their hands, palms upward, in a gesture signifying that they were ready to receive the blessings showered from above. Simultaneously the cannon began to thunder in the square outside, the batteries on the Bosphorus and the men-of-war in the Golden Horn took the hint and passed it on down the Dardanelles through the whole Empire. The troops acclaimed the Padishah, the people cheered the Parliament, the bands struck up, and in the midst of this uproar the Sultan's lips were seen moving. Though none could hear the words issuing therefrom, Abdul Hamid was understood to be invoking the blessing of Allah upon the Assembly. After this inaudible benediction and a salute with a trembling white-gloved hand, the Sultan shuffled himself out of the Parliament.

A fortnight later he entertained the deputies at a great banquet in Yildiz. All his fears had been dispelled in the meantime, and there was not the faintest symptom of

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hesitancy in his manner, as with a genial smile he greeted his guests. Throughout the dinner he maintained a lively conversation with them, and at the end he caused to be read a speech breathing the spirit of cordiality, hospitality, and piety. "Deputies and Effendis," it began, "may the Almighty increase your felicity. Truly and sincerely, I am happy to partake of a meal together with the representatives of the Ottoman nation, my subjects. I think the event of this evening is the most happy omen in the history of my Empire. May God honour us with many more such meetings! I, your Emperor and Caliph, assure and confirm, by permission of the generous God, that I have devoted myself to the maintenance of our Constitution, as the guarantee of our sacred rights, and I shall be the enemy of whosoever acts contrary to this. The Sultanate is Constitutional and Liberal. May God the Highest be pleased to assist our efforts to secure the happiness and safety of the Empire, the Nation, and the holy Fatherland."

These utterances were received with many pious exclamations of grateful approval. At the end of the evening the deputies rushed to kiss the Sultan's hand or the skirts of his coat, and the Sultan, with tears pouring from his eyes, sped them, saying, "I never have felt such satisfaction in my life, nor eaten such a sweet meal." There was no reason to doubt the sincerity of the emotion on either side. If post-prandial emotion could secure the welfare of an empire, Turkey was henceforth destined to unparalleled prosperity.

Under such beautiful auspices the Ottoman Parliament began its first session, and all the other Parlia-

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ments of Europe hastened to congratulate that youngest recruit to their ranks. The Ottoman deputies replied to these congratulations in suitable terms. "Our Parliament," they said, "is the first sign of the success of our great Revolution. It is certain that the Parliament of Young Turkey which has appreciated the importance of unity and the value of equality, though composed of such different elements, will go forward on the path of peace and concord."

Beautiful words, no doubt. But words, however beautiful, are of value only inasmuch as they correspond to realities. What was the reality for which the phrase "peace and concord" was supposed to stand? It has already been shown that the manner in which the Parliament was composed had been characterised neither by peace nor by concord. The dominant note of the elections had been one of suspicion and discord, stimulated by the prominence of the armed fist and illustrated by many eminently unpacific episodes. Even without taking into account these episodes, a thoughtful observer of the motley elements that made up that extraordinary assembly might well have asked himself: "What is the bond that can possibly keep these multifarious units permanently together? In defence of what political principle are they likely to stand shoulder to shoulder? Where is the ideal composer who will evolve a melody out of so many discrepant voices?" These questions were actually asked by many a calm spectator in various forms. Both the magnitude of the labour with which the Ottoman Parliament was confronted and the inherent weaknesses of the body that was set to perform that

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labour were too obvious to escape comment. "The task which these men of many creeds and of many races have been convoked to accomplish," said one shrewd critic, "is the regeneration of the Ottoman Empire. That in itself is perhaps the most formidable undertaking which has ever confronted any body of legislators, as it certainly is one upon which the gravest and widest issues depend. But this is not all. The men who have reformed the other great States of the world have been usually of the same blood, and often of the same faith ; they have been heirs of the same traditions and partakers in the same civilisation. However wide the differences of opinion which divided them, the forces which had moulded their ideas and their characters had been essentially the same, even when they themselves were least conscious of the fact. The men who have taken upon their shoulders the reform of the Turkish State lack this common foundation. The one tie between them is the wish to see the new system firmly established. If that tie, through one reason or another, snaps, they fall apart into a number of groups animated towards each other by the prejudices and the hatreds of centuries. Will that single tie stand the strain to which it is now inevitably to be exposed ?"

It was clear that the ordeal of the Revolution through which the Young Turks had so triumphantly passed, severe as it was, was nothing compared to the ordeal that still awaited them. It is easier to pull down than to build up. It is easier for men to agree in denouncing an evil than in deciding upon its remedies. The friction between the various parts of a machine does not begin until the machine is set

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in motion. The Ottoman parliamentary machine had been set in motion. It remained to be seen whether the diverse wheels and springs of which it was composed should be able to resist the stresses that were to be placed upon them.

CHAPTER IX

THE MACHINE AT WORK

THE first concern of the Ottoman Parliament was to scrutinise itself. Despite the careful shepherding exercised by the Committee both over the elections to the Chamber and the nominations to the Senate, black sheep had managed to creep into both folds. These intruders had to be expelled. In the Senate twenty out of its thirty-nine members had been selected by the Committee itself, yet the Committee, not satisfied with this majority, objected to the men named by the Sultan and the Grand Vizier, and the latter were made to change their nominees. The expurgation of the Chamber was a more difficult and delicate operation. The investigation of credentials involved necessarily an inquiry into various gentlemen's past. Now, I do not suppose there are many gentlemen on this planet who would care to see their past dragged out of its grave into the profane light of the market-place. There is something indecent about exhumation at the best—and the less presentable the object exhumed the more unpleasant the performance. In this instance it led to very unpleasant incidents. Some of the gentlemen whose past was attacked never got a chance of defending it : so loud was the

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uproar. Others did not venture to attempt a defence: so hopeless was their case. One deputy endeavoured to vindicate his career with a courage which compelled momentary attention. "Yes," he confessed boldly, "I have been a servant of the old *régime*, and I am not ashamed of the fact. The old *régime* led an honourable existence under the august shade of the Sultan . . ." The rest of his speech was lost in a tempest of hisses. Another, on going out of the Chamber for a breath of fresh air during an interval, was surrounded by a group of Arabs all shouting and gesticulating wildly, and was driven back in despair to the overheated atmosphere of the House.

This undignified performance, however, was a mere prelude. The serious drama began after the Chamber settled down to business.

So long as the deliberations were confined to matters of administration pure and simple, little or no friction was noticed. The debates were carried on with the edifying decency and moderation characteristic of all platonic discussions. Such reactionaries as there were left in the assembly disguised their wickedness under the virtuous mask of watchfulness over the interests of the faith. The rest of the deputies were united in a genuine wish to promote the regeneration of the fatherland, and they manifested a most laudable anxiety to contribute all the wisdom at their command towards legislation calculated to further that end. Differences of opinion naturally arose, but, as parties based on rival class interests had not yet had time to be formed, those differences did little to mar the general harmony. The House was practically united in principle.

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It was far otherwise when there were broached questions touching the national susceptibilities of the various groups. Then all the germs of distrust and discord that lay under the superficial harmony were aerated into life.

The Committee commanded a majority which seemed destined to dominate the House. But even that majority, though won largely by unconstitutional means, had come forward with the word "Constitution" inscribed on its banner. Now, Constitution implies Opposition, and the minority hastened to take the majority at its word. Of all the non-Turkish elements, the Kurds alone gave no trouble to the Committee. Those untutored tribes, perfectly innocent of the meaning of elections, had for the most part returned the deputies indicated to them by the Committee—Young Turks who had been sent by the late despotism to Kurdistan, to live there as exiles and to plot for its overthrow. These gentlemen had naturally no desire to embarrass the Committee by defending national sentiments which did not concern them. But this self-effacement did not extend to the Albanian deputies, who seized the earliest opportunity for lifting their voices in anger as soon as the language and administrative individuality of their country seemed to be threatened by legislation. Equally vigorous were the protests from the Arab group. Natives of Arabia proper, natives of Syria, and natives of Tripoli—together a party of forty-five members—forgot their minor differences in defence of their common interests as an Arabic-speaking element. The width of the sentimental gulf which separated these people from the Turks

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was vividly illustrated by a scene which occurred in the Chamber just a month after its opening. Shamseddin Bey, Minister of the Evkaf, an Arab, on being asked to give an account of his administration, concluded his speech with an Arabic prayer. The Turkish members immediately cried out against the use of that language in Parliament, and the storm that arose was very imperfectly calmed by a quibble from the President, who explained that the Arabic sentences employed did not form part of the Minister's speech, but were only a private prayer on behalf of his office—a sort of confidential “aside” between Shamseddin Bey and Allah.

As regards the Christian elements, some of the Armenian deputies continued to side with the Committee; but others, notably the adherents of the Dashnaktzoutian Society, pursued a frankly nationalist policy. While indignantly repudiating the charge of seeking to establish an independent kingdom, they demanded that every district in which their countrymen formed the majority of the population should be governed by a man of their own race. The Greeks also, already disenchanted by the conduct of the Committee during the elections, showed themselves as eager as the Albanians, the Arabs, and the Armenians to take and give offence whenever they scented danger to their nationality.

This attitude aroused the choler of the Committee. Its organs in the Press—with the *Shaura-i-Ummet* as their protagonist—accused the deputies who maintained it of forming national groups from interested motives, and denounced them as traitors or fools—villains whose proper place was in “the

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dungeons reserved for murderers." The more moderate members of the Committee, realising that criticism of this kind promoted the very schisms it was meant to check, did all that in them lay to curb the fury of their intemperate comrades. But, despite all efforts, things pursued their predestined course. The formation of nationalist groups was the natural result of the composition of the Empire—a result that no artificial repression could prevent; and all the attempts made to stifle the free expression of national sentiment only conduced to its exasperation.

Nor was national sentiment the only source of dissent. The deputies who were independent of the Committee, irrespectively of their nationality, resented that a revolutionary association, possessing no recognised status in the Constitution, should continue to wield its mysterious influence after the meeting of Parliament and to dictate the policy of the accredited Government, thus enjoying all the privileges of authority without bearing any of its responsibilities. The main grievance of the Young Turks, it was urged, had formerly been the existence of a secret and irresponsible power behind the throne, in the palace Camarilla. The main object of the Revolution was to destroy that power, whose existence was justly condemned as incompatible even with decent despotism. Now, what was a pernicious abuse under the autocracy could hardly be a blessing in the reign of liberty. True, the Committee's ideal was the welfare of the country, whereas the Camarilla's ideal had been the welfare of itself. But, in principle, both bodies were equally

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illegal and might prove equally disastrous to the country. Nay, a secret and irresponsible power behind the Parliament might prove even more baneful than such a power behind the throne had been. In any case, the divorce of authority from responsibility was a negation of the very rudiments of Constitutionalism. The Committee, argued the Opposition, should dissolve itself, and its members should carry on their patriotic mission by merging themselves in the Parliament and by striving to obtain, in an open and fair competition, such posts in the Government as their talents might fit them for. Thus, and thus only, those who wielded the power could be made answerable for its use to the country.

The Committee, naturally, declined to dissolve itself. Power is sweet, and not the less sweet for being unconstitutional. Besides, the members of the Committee felt that the Constitution was their own work. They who had borne the brunt of the day were surely entitled to some rewards above those who had only shared in the victory. Further, the Committee thought that it could not safely let the reins slip from its hands. It is true, it kept a strict watch over Abdul Hamid. But, once its strong guidance removed, Allah only knew where the chariot might be driven to: the road ahead was full of pits and snares, known or suspected.

These reasons, as might have been expected, did not convince the critics of the Committee. Even in its own *bloc* fissures began to appear—divergences of opinion on questions of general policy, widened and embittered by personal jealousies. The

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Young Turks split themselves into hostile camps, distinguished from each other by the varying degrees of the Liberalism they professed. On January 11th Dr. Riza Nour, deputy for Sinope, published in the *Yeni Gazeta* an article significant of this breach. The writer declared that members affiliated to the Committee, who had hitherto been passive tools of the Constantinople section, were now resolved to follow an independent course—a declaration of faith, or change of faith, which cost the author his place as acting chief editor of the paper, but which failed to heal the breach.

No clear and definite division into parliamentary parties took place, for the country was not yet prepared for the formation of such parties. In the days of despotism the only political parties possible were the secret revolutionary associations. Those, since the promulgation of the Constitution, continued their existence openly: they only changed their methods and in some cases their names. The principal of those associations were the "Committee of Union and Progress" and the "Committee of Decentralisation and Private Initiative." These two bodies were the result of an early split in the ranks of the Young Turks, and their difference was illustrated by their respective programmes. While the first, as has been shown, aimed at the fusion of all the elements into one Ottoman nation and the centralisation of all authority in the hands of one administration, the second advocated Home Rule all round: its programme was to apply the Constitution in its broadest sense—that is, on the basis of the co-operation of all races and creeds upon equal terms, and not on the basis of Turkish

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supremacy, which the Committee of Union and Progress favoured in practice, even though it repudiated it in theory.

This second league was under the presidency of Prince Sabbaheddin, who before the Revolution had been an ardent advocate of fusion, but who had since the Revolution seen reason for adopting a more liberal attitude. But its leading spirit was the deputy for Berat, Ismail Kemal Bey—a South Albanian chief over sixty years of age, yet preserving all his physical and mental vigour unimpaired. Under the old *régime* he had given signal proofs of administrative ability, of intellectual brilliance, and of a moral courage which had led to his disgrace and exile. While the Sultan, in common with many other potentates, rejoiced over our disasters during the earlier period of the South African War, Ismail Kemal Bey had dared to head a deputation of sympathy to the British Ambassador. On the proclamation of the Constitution the exile had returned to his country with colours flying. His South Albanian compatriots gave him a royal reception—five thousand of them crossing to Brindisi to escort him home—and elected him to Parliament as deputy for his native district.

Before Parliament met several unsuccessful attempts had been made to bring about an amalgamation between the two associations; but their aims proved irreconcilable. The friction between the two increased after the beginning of the session, and gradually the Committee of Decentralisation and Private Initiative, which had always counted among its adherents several able Young Turks—for example, Midhat Bey, son of the famous Midhat Pasha—succeeded in attracting to

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itself a number of members of the Opposition. And so, under the new name of *Ahrar*, or Liberal Union, there was formed a parliamentary group consisting of a small number of Turkish deputies, of a few Greeks, a few Armenians, a few Albanians, and a few Arabs : in brief, of the bolder spirits of the Opposition—men who held definite opinions and had the courage to brave the Committee's wrath in their defence. Many others sympathised with the aims of the Liberal Union without daring to join its ranks.

As was to be expected, there was little love lost between the Committee and the Union; Ismail Kemal Bey being especially detested by many of the Committee's members, who affirmed that the witty and resourceful Albanian had played them false while in exile, and that, if he was not a paid palace agent, he had personal ambitions incompatible with the integrity of the Ottoman Empire; his real aim, it was said, was to create an autonomous Albania under his own rule. Ismail Kemal Bey was compensated for the abhorrence of the Committee by the attachment of his own countrymen, the admiration of his brother-Liberals, and the favour of the Grand Vizier.

That exalted post was then filled by Kiamil Pasha—the second Prime Minister of Constitutional Turkey—a statesman of eighty-five who, owing to his strong Liberal views generally and his advocacy of the Armenian cause more particularly, had years before come into collision with Abdul Hamid and barely saved himself by taking refuge under the British flag. After that adventure Kiamil Pasha had lived in retirement until he was recalled to office by the Young

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Turks. Thus, like the Homeric Nestor, the aged Grand Vizier "two generations of mortal men already had seen pass away, and he held rule among the third." But his rule was not quite to the taste of the men who had called him to it.

Kiamil's position was infinitely more difficult than that of any other statesman of modern times. After having served and failed to satisfy the extinct autocracy, he was entrusted, at the age of eighty-five, with the responsibility of guiding the first steps of the nascent democracy. By accepting the thankless burden imposed upon him, at that most critical moment in his country's history, Kiamil had rendered an incalculable service both to Turkey and to the Young Turks. By the tact which he exercised in the direction of domestic affairs, and by the dexterity which he displayed in piloting the State across the perilous seas of foreign politics, the veteran statesman had won the unqualified admiration and respect of all unbiassed observers. But all these merits had failed to earn him the gratitude of the Young Turks. He was represented as, at best, a man of the past who was hindered by his great age from adapting himself to the new order of things. He was neither among the authors nor among the creatures of the Revolution. His sympathies might have always been liberal; but his whole life had been spent in the atmosphere of absolutism. It was remembered to his discredit that, although he had fitfully struggled against the Sultan, he had compromised with the palace and held office by the grace of the ancient Camarilla. He had, it was said, absolutism in his blood. He was not fit to govern a free country.

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The truth was that the Grand Vizier, in spite of his advanced age and marvellous adaptability, was not disposed to be a mere puppet in the Committee's hands. He resented the dictation of its young leaders, and tried to emancipate the Ministry from their influence. This opposition to the Committee was described as a proof of secret subservience to Yildiz Kiosk. An independent Grand Vizier was inconceivable to the Young Turk mind. All his predecessors had been puppets; if Kiamil was not their puppet, he must be the puppet of the Sultan—a reactionary in disguise. This revulsion of feeling was especially accentuated when Kiamil began to manifest a distinct leaning towards the Liberal Union. By rebelling against the power which had appointed him and siding with its rival, the Grand Vizier intensified the wrath of the Young Turks, and they did all they could to encompass his fall by instituting a violent campaign against him in the Press and the Parliament. It was even affirmed on very good authority that, early in December, some prominent members of the Committee had visited the Sultan in his palace and done their utmost to induce him to dismiss Kiamil Pasha from office and to appoint Hilmi Pasha in his place. But all these assaults failed for a time. The public had no quarrel with Kiamil Pasha, the Sultan was too wary to let himself be dragged into an unconstitutional interference with party squabbles, and a vote of confidence, accorded to Kiamil Pasha almost unanimously by the Chamber on January 13th, was interpreted as a serious blow at the Committee's influence in a House so largely of its own

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creation, and as a signal victory for the Liberal Union.

Thirteen days later the Union held a banquet at the Pera Palace Hotel in commemoration of the foundation of the Ottoman Empire by Sultan Osman. The party included the Grand Vizier, two Ministers, the President of the Senate, and about one hundred and thirty Deputies—Turks, both lay and clerical, Greeks, Armenians, Arabs and Albanians. The members of the Committee had also been invited, and it was hoped that they would come, the main idea of the banquet being to show that a discrepancy in political views was not incompatible with community of national and patriotic aims. However, at the last moment the leaders of the Committee declined the invitation. Their absence was regretted as significant of the state of tension between the two parties, which was even more eloquently emphasised next day by the rancorous comments in the Press.

The struggle had by this time passed out of the field of principle. It had degenerated into a sordid personal feud, in which the only thing that mattered was success. Both the Committee and the Liberal Union professed a whole-hearted and disinterested devotion to the Constitution, yet neither was disposed to make the least sacrifice for its consolidation. Patriotism was on the lips of both political bodies. Both were equally eloquent in chanting the praises of peace and order. For freedom and Fatherland they were both prepared to shed their blood, or so they said. Yet neither could bring itself to look upon the other as a friend. The chief business of each body seemed to be to thwart the projects of the

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other and to paint its motives in the darkest colours. The Liberal Union denounced the fallacy of the Committee's position and the Committee retaliated by denouncing the Liberal Union's folly.

Day by day the breach grew wider, and the air was full of recriminations and reports, not wholly imaginary, of *coups d'état* contemplated by the rival associations. The Committee was credited with the plan of finishing the work of the Revolution by deposing Abdul Hamid and establishing a military dictatorship under Prince Yussuf Izzeddin—a cousin of the Sultan's and a marshal in the Ottoman army. The Liberal Union was believed to be intriguing for the replacement of Abdul Hamid by the heir-apparent, Reshad Mohammed, who, having been kept a prisoner for thirty years by his brother and set free by the Constitution, was known to be a confirmed Liberal. All that restrained each party from carrying out its plot was, apparently, the fear of playing into the hands of the reactionary elements, which would have been glad to see both parties drowned and the old despotism restored. However that may be, each side seemed for the moment more concerned to frustrate its opponent's plans than to execute its own.

But this attitude of compulsory reserve could not, of course, be maintained indefinitely. Both the Committee and the Liberal Union felt that the sooner they measured forces the better. The actual state of tension was worse than any rupture. It was impossible to disguise the fact that the time for a reconciliation had gone by. The Grand Vizier's presence at the Liberal Union's banquet was regarded by the Committee as an open declaration of war, and

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its organs made no secret of their conviction that, so long as he remained in power, peace was out of the question. The solid sense of the Young Turks seemed to have deserted them. The Empire was at that hour passing through a grave foreign crisis. Austria-Hungary on one hand and Bulgaria on the other stood armed to the teeth, praying for a shipwreck of the Ottoman State, and prepared to take full advantage of such a calamity for the gratification of long-cherished ambitions. Yet the Young Turks clamoured that Kiamil Pasha, whose sagacity and moderation had so far averted a catastrophe, should quit the helm and leave the vessel to its fate. Even patriotism had given way to party passion. It was obvious that this state of things could not last long. The cable, too much twisted, was bound to cut itself.

On February 11th Kiamil Pasha took a decisive step. He suddenly dismissed from the Cabinet the Ministers of War and Marine, firm adherents of the Committee, who were said to be the chief actors in the *coup d'état* contemplated by that body. Whether that view was correct or not, their dismissal was intelligible. The Grand Vizier could not keep at the command of the military and naval forces of the Empire men bound to an irresponsible association. Their presence in the Cabinet was prejudicial to discipline. He distrusted colleagues who were subservient to an outside power, "an anonymous society," as he described it, "which I do not know and never can know." After having tried in vain to emancipate the Cabinet from the Committee's influence, Kiamil Pasha had decided to reconstruct it.

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This step infuriated the Committee, for it was regarded as a deadly blow at its prestige. Its leaders issued at once a manifesto, in which not only did they deny vigorously the charges of plotting to dethrone the Sultan, but they carried the war into the enemy's camp by declaring that these charges were lies, invented by scoundrels who acted "as the enemies of humanity and Ottomanism." At the same time its official organ, the *Shaura-i-Ummet*, attacked the Grand Vizier fiercely as guilty of a palpably reactionary move, and called upon the Chamber to refuse to sanction the violation offered to the Constitution. In this way, while the Committee's papers stirred up public opinion against the Prime Minister by representing him as a traitor, its partisans threatened disturbances in the streets—threats which necessitated the adoption of military precautions by the authorities, the new Minister of War personally superintending the distribution of troops over the capital. Finally, the Committee held a meeting, in which it passed a resolution to hoot the Grand Vizier in the Chamber.

Nor was the campaign confined to the streets and the lobbies of the House. The Committee still had many allies in the Cabinet itself. Three Ministers, as well as the Sheikh-ul-Islam, openly expressed their disapproval of the Grand Vizier's action by resigning. In the Chamber itself Kiamil Pasha enjoyed the support of the majority of the non-Turkish and of some of the Turkish deputies, but these parliamentary supporters proved powerless to protect him against a body armed with other than parliamentary weapons. When the Chamber met

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on February 13th, it was evident that the conflict was one that could not be decided by argument. The Committee's adherents, who turned up in full strength, rejected all suggestions of compromise: nothing but the fall of the Grand Vizier would satisfy them. The battle was carried on both in the Chamber and in the passages, which were packed with deputies engaged in vehement altercations, while crowds of interested spectators—diplomats, princes of the Imperial family, and ordinary strangers—watched the scene from the boxes. It was a scene that threw a singularly instructive light upon the Ottoman parliamentary machine at work.

Meanwhile, the Minister round whose name the battle raged remained absent from the field. Repeated messages were sent to him by telegraph and telephone to appear and answer the questions which the House wished to put to him. The only reply was that the Grand Vizier considered it advisable, in the interests of the country, to postpone all interpellations and explanations till the following Wednesday. For the moment he confined himself to a general defence of the motives which had impelled him to the step he had taken. This answer was received with loud cries of anger from Kiamil Pasha's opponents, whose wrath grew even more lively when the President went on to read certain communications sent by the dismissed Ministers, as well as a collective proclamation from the officers of the fleet, who protested against the Grand Vizier's conduct, refused to recognise the new Minister of Marine, describing him as a loathsome spy of Yildiz, and requested the House to save the

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country from the danger that menaced it. A furious debate ensued, in the course of which Kiamil Pasha was denounced as a traitor, a liar, and a tyrant by the partisans of the Committee, with the connivance of the President, while the voices raised in his defence were drowned in the din. But those voices were few. The Committee had at its disposal both the military and naval forces, and it had not scrupled to use that advantage for intimidating the deputies during the last two days. And so it came to pass that the House which a month earlier had given the aged statesman an enthusiastic and all but unanimous vote of confidence was now compelled to censure him unheard, almost unanimously. A resolution was put and passed by 198 votes, declaring that Kiamil Pasha no longer possessed the confidence of Parliament, and demanding that the Sultan should appoint a new Grand Vizier. Only eight members refused to vote against their convictions, and only one ventured to speak out on behalf of the unpopular Minister—that was the brave Ismail Kemal Bey, the Albanian leader of the Liberal Union.

The Committee's victory, brought about by the display of armed force, needless to say, was scarcely a parliamentary victory. In fact, it was a victory over Parliamentarism and Constitutionalism. But the end sanctifies the means. The Committee justified itself by declaring that Kiamil Pasha "by his unconstitutional acts has placed us under the obligation of overthrowing him." True, the overthrow was effected by brute force, but that force was employed in order to ensure respect for free-

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dom! Paradoxical though it might seem, the Committee's action was Liberal in spirit, whatever might be thought of its material expression. Many were convinced by this reasoning, and many more thought it prudent to simulate conviction. Kiamil Pasha submitted to his fate with great dignity. He said that he was glad to be relieved of a burden which he had never sought, and that he would now watch the men who overthrew him and "see how they would get on." He washed his hands definitely of all connection with "a *régime* of Janissaries."

A new Cabinet was formed under Hilmi Pasha, who had been Minister of the Interior in the late Government, but who was best known from his long tenure of office as Inspector-General in Macedonia during the six years which preceded the Revolution. In that post Hilmi Pasha had distinguished himself by his remarkable power of work no less than by his remarkable skill in reconciling the orders of the Palace with the demands of the representatives of the Powers which had taken the reform of that province in hand. It was a task needing a combination of flexibility with firmness, and an acrobatic adroitness of no common order. Hilmi Pasha had given evidence of the possession of these requisites in quite a phenomenal measure. The result was that he had succeeded in earning the respect of the foreign advisers, who admired his cleverness, extolled his industry, and felt grateful for his courtesy, without for an instant alienating the confidence reposed in him by the Sultan.

I had heard the praises of Hilmi sung in Macedonia by many diplomatists of various nationalities, and a

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few years ago I had an opportunity of verifying their justness by personal experience. I still remember how I found his Highness in his humble headquarters at Uskub, bending over a sheet of paper, held doubled-up between four long, capable-looking fingers and a strong thumb of the left hand, while the right hand was busy drawing upon the paper curling characters with a reed-pen. Many other sheets of paper covered with similar hieroglyphs lay thick as snow upon the floor round the Inspector's feet. As I entered, the Pasha's face peeped over the rim of the paper for an instant, but it was immediately withdrawn behind the screen. I sat down upon a sofa opposite his Highness's desk and gazed at the ink-pot in which the Pasha dipped his reed. Coffee and cigarettes were brought to me, and I partook of both, still gazing at the ink-pot. The reed travelled with monotonous regularity to the ink-pot and back again to the doubled-up paper in the Pasha's hand, but the Pasha never lifted his eyes off the document. Sheet after sheet was covered with curling characters and sank to the floor, adding to the heap of snow-flakes round the Pasha's feet, but the Pasha never spoke a word. The only sound that broke the chilling silence was the noise of the reed as it scratched and scrawled from right to left. Hilmi was obviously a pasha who had lost the old-world affability which distinguishes Orientals of rank, without having yet acquired the rudeness of Occidental officials. Meanwhile his manners were typical of that unhappy medium which makes a visitor feel very uncomfortable.

Afterwards I learnt that this was Hilmi's usual mode of receiving visitors, and it was quoted to me

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as a proof of his transcendent ability that he could carry on a conversation without interrupting his occupation. I was also informed that there he sat day after day from dawn till dusk laboriously scrawling and scratching, and strewing the floor with despatches, and I was assured that the weekly output of his Highness's industry exceeded all bounds of credibility. But, even in my ignorance of these valuable facts, I could not but look with profound admiration, which amounted almost to fascination, at the silent, stooping figure, and those long, capable-looking fingers. I felt that I was in the presence of a great machine.

Report had already spoken as highly of Hilmi's good intentions as it had spoken of his industry, and my eyes now beheld them spreading over a larger and yet larger area upon the floor, until the path to Hilmi's chair seemed literally paved with good intentions. If those good intentions were not translated into something more tangible, the fault was no doubt due to the fact that Hilmi's industry was handicapped by want of independent authority for carrying out his reforms, and by the incompetence of the Turkish officials who served under him, to say nothing of the irritating interference of the foreign advisers who served over him. However that may be, the painful lack of practical result did nothing to impair the Inspector's reputation for administrative ability. As to his diplomatic dexterity, did he not manage, Allah only knew how, amid the hungry assaults upon his master's inheritance by Bulgarian, Servian, Greek and Roumanian propagandas, to maintain that inheritance intact? At the very moment when I sat opposite him Macedonia was on the eve of a volcanic eruption and

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Albania was actually up in arms. Yet Hilmi went on scrawling and scratching as if his chair was planted in the most tranquil of offices in the dulllest part of Downing Street. Through the window I could see the yellow stream of the Vardar flowing muddily under a blazing sun, between two rows of dusty and decrepit acacias, the stone bridge that spanned its banks, the multi-coloured crowds passing and perspiring over it, and a mosque with a cracked dome looking across the river. The drowsy twitter of an exhausted sparrow came in through the open window intermittently, suggestive of the terrible heat that baked Uskub. Yet Hilmi's hand showed not a bead of perspiration. It went on scrawling and scratching, with an indefatigable relentlessness that hypnotised the spectator.

At last the Pasha pressed the button of an electric bell close to his elbow, and a stalwart *aide-de-camp* appeared on the threshold, saluted, and, bending low, picked up the scattered fruits of his Highness's industry from the floor. He was evidently accustomed to the work of Reform. I availed myself of the diversion created by the officer's entry to address his Highness. Hilmi Pasha lifted his eyes to me, and for quite a second, without exaggeration, I had the benefit of a full view of his countenance. It was disappointing—a pale, almost livid, face, partly concealed by a black beard growing high into the cheeks and a dark red fez covering the forehead and coming down to the ears on each side. What remained visible between the beard and the fez consisted of a massy, monumental nose and two black eyes, melancholy and proud, penetrating and mocking at once. A frigid

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smile hovered over the lips. Clever, hard, and cold was the expression of the face, and the tone of the voice, when the Pasha spoke at last, was in harmony with it. Hilmi, were he not an earnest and hard-working Reformer, known to be brimming over with good intentions, might easily have been mistaken for a callous old cynic deep in a scientific game of strenuous "bluff."

We first talked about the situation in Macedonia. I knew enough of what was going on already, but I wished to obtain a view of the problem from the fountain-head of the man who knew all. I was prepared for a copious refutation of the myriads of complaints and claims advanced from a thousand quarters, for an eloquent vindication of the integrity of the Ottoman Empire, menaced by a thousand hostile forces. I expected, at least, a look of indignation, a gesture of impatience. Nothing of the kind. His Highness informed me, in a placid conversational tone which sent my thoughts flying back to a dear old aunt's tea-table, that some encounters had lately taken place between Bulgarian malefactors and Ottoman troops ; that the losses of the former were overwhelming, while those sustained by the latter were insignificant, and he brushed the whole affair aside with the assurance that, without a doubt, the malignant elements would soon cease to disturb public order. "In the meantime," he added, "the Imperial Government is taking what doctors call prophylactic measures for the preservation of the health—otherwise perfect—of the body politic." All these statements Hilmi Pasha uttered with a smile which anticipated my own scepticism. It seemed to say,

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"You know, my friend, as well as I do, that these are phrases with which we politicians conceal our thoughts or the lack of them." It was delightful: it was playing the game with the skill and suavity of a master.

I touched with all possible delicacy on the fierce feud between Bulgar, Serb, Greek, and Roumanian. The Pasha admitted, with a smile, that there was some difference of opinion among these nationalities. But what would you? Even the best of friends must fall out at times. But we should not exaggerate the gravity of the quarrel. It would soon pass. *Tout s'arrange.*

I then broached the subject of Albania.

"Oh," said his Highness, with his sardonic smile and a curious twinkle in his eye, "the Albanian troubles are over. The chieftains have surrendered with pleasure to his Imperial Majesty's clemency, and the peasants are most happy and contented. Albania is now enjoying perfect tranquillity."

"I am exceedingly glad to hear that," said I, "for it was one of the objects of my call to ask for your Highness's permission to travel in Albania."

His Highness's smile vanished at once.

"Impossible!" he said, with the first gesture he had allowed himself so far. "The Sublime Porte cannot undertake the responsibility——"

"But if the country is enjoying perfect tranquillity," urged I, smiling in my turn.

Hilmi Pasha, however, was superior to logic and proof against irony.

"Impossible," he repeated, with solemnly uplifted hand.

"I can quite appreciate your Highness's scruples,"

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I persisted. "But I assure you I am not one of those who think it right that the Porte should be held responsible for any accident that might befall a foreign subject while travelling in the Sultan's dominions. When we come to Turkey we know what to expect."

That was rather a tactless confession, but truth will out.

"You mean that you make your wills before coming here," said the Pasha, with the frigid smile and the twinkle coming back.

"Well, yes," I laughed, "those of us who happen to have anything to make a will about. But, seriously speaking, I consider it most unfair that the Turkish Government should be called upon to pay for our love of excitement, or what you might perhaps, not unjustly, call our impertinence."

I was quite in earnest in expressing this view. What right, indeed, have we to exact reparation for the mishaps we voluntarily court? Why should the Turk be made to pay for the annoyance which we cause him by prowling about in places from which he is so anxious to exclude us? Or is it not enough that we will not let his subjects even fight and cut each other's throats in peace?

I tried to convince the Pasha of my sincerity by offering to leave it in black and white that, should anything unpleasant happen to me, no one ought to worry the Porte on my paltry account. But Hilmi Pasha refused to be convinced.

"No!" he said, with brows and eyes and reed-armed hand all uplifted in a negative of remorseless finality. He treated my offer as a bad pleasantry, and

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knowing, as I did, what the Turk's experience of Western sense of equity had hitherto been, I did not wonder.

Such was the position of Hilmi Pasha in Macedonia from 1902 till 1908. The manner in which he filled it showed the man. That he worked hard was indisputable, and equally indisputable was that he achieved nothing. Whatever his personal intentions might be, he was not a free agent. His hands were tied by the Sultan and the Sultan's favourites. He was obliged to be in direct and constant communication with Yildiz Kiosk. To Yildiz Kiosk he submitted all his measures, and from Yildiz Kiosk he received all his instructions. Further, he had to cope with the jealousy of the local governors over whose heads he had been so suddenly raised. For Hilmi is a *novus homo*. A native of Mytilene, of obscure origin, partly, it is said, Greek, he began his career as secretary to Kemal Bey, the famous Young Turk writer of the last generation, who did so much for the creation of a modern Turkish literature, who introduced into the Turkish language the word "patriotism," and helped by means of that literary revival the political Revolution in Turkey. After his patron's death Hilmi is said to have conquered Abdul Hamid's favour by delivering into his Majesty's hands Kemal Bey's manuscripts, which were destroyed for the same reason for which the published works of that patriot were officially banned. Abdul Hamid, appreciating at its true value the force of liberalism, did his best to crush it by crushing the literary movement which fostered it. Hilmi's assistance in that crusade was handsomely recognised, and by a skilful use of Imperial

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favour the young man climbed higher and higher—ever pulling up the ladder after him—till he attained the rank of Vizier and the post of Governor of the Yemen. Having thus by his experience of Arabia qualified for the administration of Macedonia, he was created Inspector-General of that province, much to the annoyance of men better born and more highly distinguished than himself, but less skilful in the manipulation of the ladder.

For six years, as already stated, Hilmi contrived to govern Macedonia, earning the appreciation of foreign critics despite his failure, and maintaining the Sultan's esteem on account of it. When the Young Turk movement spread in Macedonia, Hilmi was confronted with a dilemma that might have cost a less gifted man his life, his reason, or at least his official career. He had to choose between his loyalty to Abdul and his fear of Abdul's enemies. He ended by conciliating both. At the eleventh hour, when the success of the Young Turks seemed inevitable, he placed his intelligence and experience at their service, and brought all his influence to bear on persuading Abdul Hamid that his best policy was a graceful surrender. Abdul Hamid was persuaded, and Hilmi, who had prospered so well under the autocracy, established a great claim on the democracy : *tout s'arrange*.

Soon afterwards Hilmi Pasha, who had all his life been regarded as a faithful servant of Oriental despotism, was heard describing himself as an ardent admirer of the British Constitution. To an English collocutor he said, "Yes, certainly ; party government, such as you have in England, will be the salvation of Turkey, and the sooner we get it the

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better." With such wonderful agility did this remarkable man adapt himself to the sentiments, and with such extraordinary versatility did he adopt the very phrases of his new masters.

Virtue is sometimes rewarded with encouraging quickness. Hilmi Pasha had not to wait long for his reward. He was from the first singled out as Kiamil's successor, and, as we saw, the fall of Kiamil opened the way to the chief post in the Ottoman Government for Hilmi. The new Grand Vizier's first action was to address a circular to the Powers assuring them that he would follow the foreign policy of his predecessor. By this means he allayed the fears which had arisen abroad from the accession to power of a Minister who owed his elevation to the triumph of militarism, and might therefore have been expected to seek to satisfy his supporters by a more chauvinist programme. Having thus conciliated foreign opinion, he addressed himself to domestic opinion. Four days after his elevation he made in the Chamber a speech which was pronounced, by experts in matters of that sort, a masterpiece of political tact and sound judgment. He began by admitting the supremacy of Parliament in terms highly gratifying to the Committee and at the same time pleasing to the Liberal Union. But he carefully avoided committing himself on the most controversial point which was at the bottom of the strife between the two parties—namely, the position of the non-Turkish elements in the Empire.

The Committee, all-powerful once more, strove to clear any doubts that might still be haunting the public mind as to the purity of its motives and the excellence

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of its methods. Its official organ frankly admitted the charge, which it could not refute, that the Committee had influenced the elections, but the end justified the means. The object aimed at was to secure the welfare of the country, not to promote selfish interests. The result was the return of the most capable members of the present Parliament—had they not demonstrated their capacity by obeying the Committee's behests? The only deputy, again, who had the audacity to question the proceedings of the powers that be was the Albanian, Ismail Kemal Bey. But his opposition, for the moment, was quite ineffectual. The majority, sobered by the recent lesson, had no stomach for another struggle. Indeed, it almost looked as if there was nothing left to struggle for. The Committee had nothing more to gain; the Liberal Union nothing more to lose. Both sides seemed disposed to accept the situation with equanimity. If the Liberal Union had consisted of fatalists it would then have given up a fight that henceforth, with a Grand Vizier wholly dependent on their rivals and an army and fleet wholly subservient to them, seemed foredoomed to defeat. But the members of the Liberal Union were no fatalists. Defeat, instead of disheartening, exasperated them. After a few days' calm the storm burst again with renewed fury, and its violence was reflected in the savage personalities in which the journals of the hostile parties indulged.

The party in power made strenuous efforts to stifle all criticism of its policy. When it became known that the fallen Grand Vizier's sympathisers proposed to organise a demonstration in his favour on Feb-

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ruary 26th, the Government issued an edict warning the public against meetings without previous notice to the police. Individual members of the Committee urged the public to boycott the organs of the Liberal Union. Lastly, a resolution demanding the expulsion of the editors of three journals—one of them English and two Greek—which had distinguished themselves in controversy with the journals of the Committee was adopted at a public meeting and forwarded to the Grand Vizier and the President of the Chamber. The reading of that resolution in the House gave rise to a vehement debate, several deputies loudly declaring that the inconvenient newspapers should be suppressed, and the Chamber finally adopted a motion inviting the Government to prosecute them as prejudicial to the interests of the Empire.

This intolerance disgusted a good many of the supporters of the Committee itself. General Sherif Pasha, ex-Minister to Stockholm, resigned his membership as a mark of disapproval of methods which, he considered, involved serious danger to the country, and the Adrianople, Uskub, and Scutari branches of the Committee broke away from the central organisation for the same reason. But the Committee went its way serenely, regardless of these omens. One or two attempts were made to bring about a reconciliation between the rival parties on condition that each should in future respect the other's rights and refrain from attacks. But these attempts failed. The storm continued to rage. The adherents of the Liberal Union denounced the Committee as aiming at the establishment of a military oligarchy, pointing in proof

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of their contention to the imperious tone assumed by Ahmed Riza, the President of the Chamber, as well as to the arbitrary measures taken by the Government for the suppression of public opinion by muzzling the Press and prohibiting public meetings. The spokesmen of the Committee retorted by repudiating all connexion with the Government, which in fact they controlled, and by denouncing the Liberal Union as a revolutionary association. These violent dissensions among Liberals proved how hard it is even for birds of a feather to flock permanently together. But, to make matters worse, all the birds engaged in this strife were not really of a feather.

CHAPTER X

THE CLOUDS ARE GATHERING

THE Parliamentary warfare described in the preceding chapter, serious as it was, would have been comparatively innocuous had it been confined to the political factions immediately engaged in it. Unfortunately, the struggle waged in the Ottoman Chamber was only typical of divisions that extended far beyond its walls. In the first place, there is every reason to believe that the internecine strife between the two great Liberal groups was fomented by the reactionary forces which, though cowed, had not been crushed by the Revolution. One of the protagonists in the journalistic campaign, Ali Kemal, editor of the *Ikdam*, an accomplished publicist with a first-rate Paris education and an incisive pen, whom the Liberal Union innocently honoured as one of its sincerest champions, was afterwards proved to have been only a versatile agent of despotism cleverly disguised as a demagogue : so cleverly that, when it was announced that he intended to contest a seat in Constantinople left vacant in March as a Liberal candidate, even one of the shrewdest foreign observers was moved to support his claims in the following terms : "Ali Kemal Bey, who is among the leading men of letters in Turkey, an

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excellent speaker, and personally very popular, would be a most valuable recruit to the party." The very members of the Committee, who were so ready to smell a palace spy in every opponent, never suspected Ali Kemal Bey's good faith. One of them told me that he personally had never been deceived and that he had repeatedly warned his friends against the accomplished adventurer. But this confession of sagacity was made after the archives of Yildiz Kiosk had been forced to yield their secrets.

Meanwhile Ali Kemal was only one out of many servants of the old *régime* who eagerly awaited their opportunity for overthrowing the new. The Young Turks had not been prudent enough or powerful enough to get rid of all the formidable elements. The dispossessed favourites had a numerous following, and it was natural that all those gentlemen who were too deeply compromised in the Hamidian tyranny to expect any share in the order of things that had supplanted it should form the nucleus of a group of malcontents which would gradually attract to itself those partisans of the Revolution who considered their services inadequately rewarded. Moreover, the success of the Constitution involved the purification of the administration by the ejection, sooner or later, from the Palace and the Porte of all corrupt and incompetent officials—a large and powerful class whose hopes, at first damped, were revived by the breach in the ranks of Reform. As early as January the police had discovered a nest of reactionaries masquerading as Radicals in the offices of the *Lukuk-i-Umunieh*. A search of those literary premises brought to light a quantity of arms. Two days later a similar raid on

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the headquarters of a club called Fedaikiarans, or "Self-sacrificed for the Country," had revealed documents which led to the arrest of thirty-one of its members on a charge of plotting to overthrow the Constitution and, if necessary, to cause foreign intervention by a massacre of foreign Ambassadors and subjects.

It is true, the documents on which the charge was based were said to have been a forgery produced by the Committee itself as a means of ruining a rival association. But the affair, though wrapped in mystery, showed that the danger of reaction had not died out, and the Minister of Police, at all events, believed that he was on the track of a large band of conspirators of the worst type. Whether Abdul Hamid himself was in any way concerned in these machinations seems highly doubtful. But there is no doubt whatsoever that they were carried on under the auspices of some of his principal courtiers—such as the eunuch Nadir Agha, the controller of the Civil List Halis Effendi, the Sultan's chief physician, and, above all, his favourite son, Prince Burhaneddin—who spared neither calumny nor coin in the prosecution of their designs.

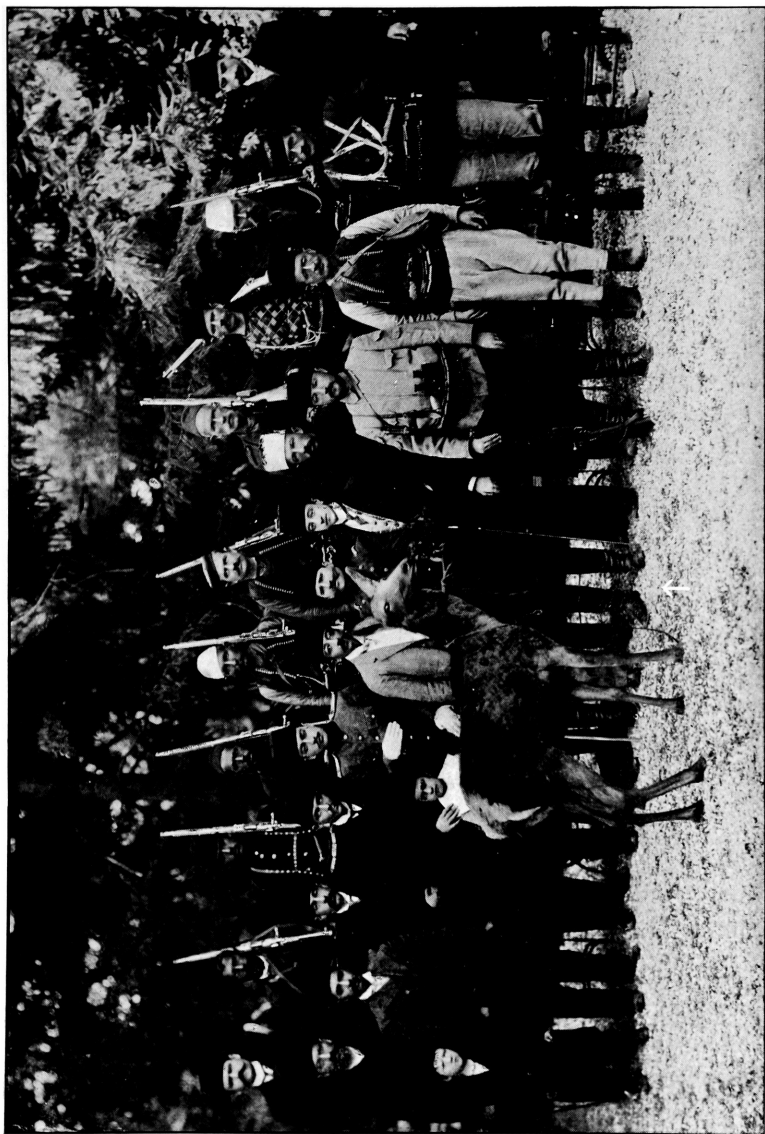
But these gentry were not the only persons who watched the development of affairs with interest. The Revolution owed its victory very largely to the co-operation of the Mohammedan clergy and the army. The Committee had done its best to alienate both these valuable allies. It alienated some of them by being too Liberal and others by not being Liberal enough. Let us consider the clergy first.

It is often said that all Mohammedan clerics are

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obscurantists by temperament and conviction. That is not true. I have met among them men far more broad-minded, far more deeply imbued with the real principles of Liberalism and the wider sympathies of an enlightened patriotism, far more eager for union and progress, than many of the members of the Committee of Union and Progress; and that, too while unable to boast of any of the blessings of Occidental "culture" enjoyed by the latter. For, though these men travel little and read less, they reflect much. Moreover, some of the Oriental books—the only books accessible to them—which they do read, thanks to the Turkish literary revival of which Kemal Bey was in the last generation one of the pioneers, serve the cause of intellectual emancipation at least as well as do the newspapers of the Paris boulevards, which have so largely contributed to the formation of the Young Turk mind.

Some time ago I was fortunate enough to make the acquaintance of a very favourable specimen of this class. He was an elderly, well-fed and well-bred gentleman of some sixty years of age, with grave grey eyes, a short stubby beard cut in the clerical manner, and an expression of calm, dignified contentment which pervaded his kindly face and all his movements. He was dressed in the old Turkish fashion—a white turban, baggy breeches, and an ample robe falling in rich folds from his shoulders to his feet—a costume which, unlike our jejune garments, suggests at once ease of body, breadth of spirit, an illimitable appetite, and a boundless hospitality. In dress and deportment alike my friend presented an admirable example of that solid, massive,



Niazi Bey, with his Albanians and his pet deer.

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and severely plain style of architecture known as the Doric order.

We had found ourselves together in a railway carriage in Macedonia. I was going to Monastir. He seemed to be moving in the same direction. We contemplated one another for some time with that frank and unashamed curiosity which in the East is not considered impertinent, and, in truth, it is not. The Oriental regards a stranger as an individual sent by Allah to be entertained, protected, robbed, or cross-questioned, as chance may will, but under no circumstances to be ignored. My companion appeared to be as satisfied with the contemplation of my meagre, as I was with that of his serene and majestic personality.

"You come from England, sir," he said at last, and the words dripped from his lips with the same clear, slow, deliberate distinctness as fell the beads of the rosary between his fingers.

I pleaded guilty. Whereupon he proffered me his tobacco-case and the information that he himself was returning to Veria, or Kara-Feria, and that he was a Cadi. I told him who I was, and so we became friends.

This happened about the time of the pacification of the Transvaal, and my Cadi was curious to know all about the state of the country after the war. He seemed pleased on hearing that things were more or less settling down, and that perfect freedom, peace, and contentment were expected to reign henceforth in South Africa. "Just as in Turkey," he said, without the least suspicion of sardonic humour. But comparisons are not always pleasing, so I changed

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the subject by an ingenious observation about the weather. The Cadi agreed that it was hot, and showed the reality of his conviction by taking off his turban and exposing to my wondering eyes the somewhat disillusioning vision of a conical, clean-shaven head with two hairs standing up on it like trees on the desolate peak of some wind-swept rock. But the Cadi's conversation showed that there was more inside that head than appeared on the surface. Presently the train stopped at Veria.

"This is my home," said the Cadi, replacing his turban; "I hope you will do me the honour to spend the day with me."

"But I am going to Monastir," said I.

"What does that matter?" he replied. "You can go to Monastir some other day. You are young yet, and there are three hundred and sixty-five days in the year."

It took me thirty seconds to get on to the Cadi's point of view. But I finally accomplished the gymnastic feat—What did it matter, indeed?—and I accepted his invitation.

"Ours is a very ancient city," remarked my host, pointing with his pipe down to the weather-browned wooden casements and tile roofs of the houses, as, after the necessary ablutions, we sat in the open, breezy hall of his mansion, smoking our cigarettes and sipping our sedimental coffee, "though Homer does not mention it," he added sorrowfully.

By this time I was past surprises. So I simply asked my host whether he had read Homer in the original.

"No," he said, "I do not know enough Greek ;

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but there are now Arabic and Turkish translations. I have studied them carefully, but I could not find in them any mention of our city ; which I thought strange."

I comforted my host by telling him that Homer had no doubt overlooked Veria as it happened to be out of his way.

"Moreover," he suggested, "the poet was blind, was he not ? So our books say."

"True, O Cadi," said I, "he was blind, and also at times sleepy."

Then I made my host happy and myself miserable by informing him that Thucydides, a much more accurate chronicler than Homer, had something to say about Veria. Of course, the Cadi wanted to hear when, and where, and how. So I had to recall my classical lore. His comments on the story of the Athenian attack on his city were inspired by a local patriotism worthy of an ancient Athenian and were enlivened by a simplicity worthy of any child. I had never before met a Turk possessed of what we understand by the phrase "local patriotism," but my friend was the descendant of an old provincial family, and he took as much pride in the antiquities of the district, pagan and Christian, ancient and modern, as any Greek. Not less novel was to me the discovery of a Turk possessed of what we understand by the word "interests." For neither of those expressions existed in the Turkish language a generation ago, any more than the things for which they stand existed in Turkish life. To my Cadi, too, as we talked about the past of Macedonia, I owed the best definition of archæology—including ethnology and philology—

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I had ever heard: "The science that teaches us where things come from," and he illustrated it by referring to the excavations at Babylon, which, he said, showed where modern arts came from, to the study of Sanskrit, which showed where modern languages came from, and to the researches of folk-lore, which showed where different customs came from.

When we had exhausted the past, my host asked me what I thought of the actual condition of Macedonia.

"It is a rich country," said I cautiously, "but somewhat undeveloped."

"Ay, ay, that is exactly what it is. We need education, we need combination, we need energy, we need capital, we need credit, we need everything. As it is, we are content with little, and want that little at once. We cannot wait, and we do not trust each other. How, then, can we develop our country? Look at yon plain. The soil is fertile, but it is suffered to remain *tchair*—pasture land. Look at yonder chestnuts. They have not been planted by man, nor tended by man. Allah has brought them into being, and Allah nourishes them. Allah is the cause of all things. 'Allah produceth for us that which the earth bringeth forth, herbs and cucumbers, and garlic and lentils, and onions,' as the Book truly says. We are a frugal people, and there is no need why we should fatigue ourselves. Would you, sir, be wandering over the world if you were a wealthy lord? Certainly not. What is it that makes you fatigue yourself—is it not want?"

I knew how hopeless would be any attempt to convince the Cadi that there might be other than a

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stomachic stimulus to locomotion. For, in spite of his archæological interests, did he not, after all, belong to a world whose paradise consists of rivers of milk, and honey, and wine ; of succulent fruit growing "near at hand," so that the pious may easily reach it "as they lie down" upon couches of thick silk interwoven with gold—to say nothing of the agreeable, black-eyed young ladies whose complexions are like rubies and pearls? Has ever prophet, with the possible exception of Lucullus and Anacreon, imagined anything more earthy than Mohammed's heaven?

So I said politely, "You speak truly, O Cadi," and I continued to listen to his conversation, fascinated by its quaint *naïveté* and the singular mixture in the speaker's mind which it revealed: the deep-rooted resignation of Islam and the traditional Asiatic passivity, battling feebly with the foreign notions of progress implanted by the reading of modern Turkish books and magazines. It was like hearing an American apostle trying to preach the gospel of the strenuous life in Arabic. Yet through all that confusion one could see the new peeping over the shoulders of the old—a genuine, if half understood, wholly unconscious yearning after self-improvement—an uneasy feeling for a better future, whimsically combined with a proud acquiescence in the actual.

My Cadi was the representative of a class—the venerable *ulemas*—men learned in the Sacred Law of Islam, noble by rank and rich by inheritance. They form the only aristocracy known among the Turks, and they have always clung with patrician tenacity to the prerogatives of their order. Even in the times when the greatest pashas of the Empire cheerfully

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submitted to loss of fortune, of dignity, and of life at the Sultan's command, these bishops by birth dared to defend their privileges against the encroachments of the Padishah. Since the dawn of Liberalism in Turkey they have displayed a wonderful capacity for reconciling the dictates of faith with the demands of freedom, for subordinating the abstract tenets of divinity to the practical interests of humanity, and for using orthodoxy as a help and not a hindrance to political development. It is they who have achieved the remarkable feat of convincing themselves and many of their countrymen that the best theoretical sanction for a Constitution is to be found in the Koran, that despotism is a flagrant violation of the teaching of the Prophet, and that the true spirit of Islam is in favour of a democratic form of government,—all tenets of which the Young Turks had eagerly availed themselves in pushing their propaganda.

While I was at Salonica last April one of these progressive divines—Omer Effendi, sheikh of the convent Ikee Loulay—delivered at the club of the Committee an address in which he dwelt upon the services which the Constitution had rendered to the Sacred Law: "We theologians, too," he said, "have suffered from the evils of tyranny. Certain holy books were either forbidden in our schools by the police or were mutilated by the Censor. The Constitution," he concluded, "is in accordance with the Sheriat, which condemns despotism!"

The Committee had estranged many of these enlightened theologians by first courting their assistance and then treating them as a climber treats a ladder for which he thinks he has no further use. After all,

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even a broad-minded divine is human, and the conduct of the Committee induced some of the *ulemas*, sincerely as they detested the old *régime*, to sigh secretly for the chastisement of the new: *nota mala res optima est*. It was better to suffer at the hands of the Caliph they knew than to be snubbed by a band of insolent young men who had no claim to their allegiance. But bitter as was the resentment aroused among the *ulemas*, it was nothing compared to the hostility entertained towards the Committee by the lower and unenlightened orders of the Mohammedan clergy.

The experiment which the Young Turks essayed, if carried to its logical conclusion, amounted to nothing less than the transformation of the Ottoman polity from a theocracy into a democracy: that is, to the negation of the sacred principle which had always governed the relations between True Believers and infidels. This meant that the *rayah*, who had hitherto been popularly considered as an individual destined by Providence to toil, obey, and pay taxes to Allah's chosen people, should henceforth possess in the government of the Empire an equal voice with his masters. To the ordinary Turk the position was revolting. It was as if a farmer were suddenly told that in future he should share the control of his farm with his cattle. To the ordinary cleric the proposition was more than revolting—it was impious. And the influence of the lower clergy upon the Mohammedan masses can easily be estimated by any one who reflects that elementary education is entirely in the hands of the *hodjas* and that the only places where the masses regularly meet for the discussion of

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public affairs and the formation of political opinions are the mosques. How profound is the pride, ignorance, and superstition of the minds upon which clerical influence is exerted can be seen from the following incident. It happened a few months ago at Damascus. A certain sheikh, who belonged to the enlightened class of which my Cadi is so delightful an example, entered one of the greatest mosques in the city on a Friday, and mounting the pulpit, began to preach upon the Mohammedan equivalent of Coheleth's text : "It is good that thou shouldst take hold of this (*i.e.*, the Sacred Law), yet also from that (*i.e.*, modern science and foreign culture) withdraw not thy hand : for he that feareth God shall come forth of them all." The congregation listened to the preacher in a silence which might have been interpreted as a proof of profound acquiescence or of profound slumber. But it was neither. It was simply a proof of Oriental politeness. For next Friday another sheikh, who belonged to the benighted class, mounted the same pulpit and heartily anathematised his predecessor as a pestilent heretic. The anathema was received by the congregation in a manner that made any mistake as to its meaning impossible. The preacher of the new gospel had to flee for his life. The authorities, apprised of the tumult and apprehensive of graver disturbances, arrested the obscurantist preacher ; but the mischief had already been done. The mob, whose fanaticism had been stirred to its depths, gathered in their thousands, surrounded the jail, clamouring for the liberation of the sheikh and trying to lynch the Chief of the Police, who had caused his imprisonment. Peace was not restored and the official's life was not secured

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until the garrison was called out to deal with the populace.

Nor was obscurantism the only fountain of the ill-feeling nourished towards the Young Turks by the ignorant clergy. The Reform programme menaced the interests of the religious orders as much as it offended their sentiments. It involved the abolition of the privileges and immunities which the Mohammedan ministers had enjoyed from time immemorial. Hitherto all ecclesiastical institutions—mosques and *medressehs* alike—had the right to administer their own property, to appoint their own *hodjas*, and to deal with their revenues as seemed best to the trustees. The Young Turks wished to see the control of these pious foundations undertaken by the Government—a step that would deprive many pious persons of a rich source of profit and power. And this was not all. Hitherto no certificate of theological proficiency, or of any other kind of efficiency, was required from a *hodja*, and *hodjas* as well as *softas* (*i.e.*, theological teachers and students) were exempt from military service. The Young Turks refused to consider the fact of a man's being a bad theologian as sufficient excuse for his not making a good soldier. Therefore, it was decreed that all *softas* should forthwith be examined in theology, and all those who should be found unfit to serve God should be compelled to serve their country. This innovation roused intense indignation among the inmates of the *medressehs*, who had for centuries been accustomed to a life of uncultured leisure, interrupted only by the exigencies of mechanical devotion and the daily consumption of innumerable cups of

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coffee. The multitude of these privileged mortals and their utter uselessness was revealed by an official inquiry. It was ascertained that the theological seminaries of Brussa and Adrianople alone harboured no fewer than 35,000 *softas*, of whom 80 per cent. had donned the student's turban only in order to escape the soldier's fez. When these bearded undergraduates were subjected to an examination, scarcely 10 per cent. of them succeeded in passing the test. They were immediately requested to pass into the ranks. As was natural, the request served to swell immensely the ranks of the malcontents.

Further, the formal annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina by Austria and the declaration of Bulgarian independence, coupled with the violent sweeping away of the last vestiges of Ottoman domination from Eastern Roumelia, came to intensify the discontent of the Turkish masses with their new rulers. Incredible as it may appear, those masses were not aware that Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria and Eastern Roumelia had ceased to be Ottoman provinces thirty years ago. Such disagreeable facts were never mentioned by the Turkish Press in the days of the autocracy. The ordinary Turk, therefore, imagined that those losses had just occurred, and he blamed the Constitution for the diminution of the territory and prestige of the Empire. The Young Turks, instead of enlightening the people and saving their own faces by laying the blame on the shoulders which should rightly bear it, fatuously fanned an indignation they had not the means of satisfying and thereby added, without knowing, a new count to the indictment of them-

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selves, and supplied their enemies with a fresh weapon of attack.

Political considerations apart, there was enough in the private manners of many Young Turks to rouse the antipathy of the orthodox Mohammedan mind. Many of them had spent the best years of their lives in the highly unorthodox atmosphere of the Quartier Latin and the twinkling *cafés* of the French capital. During their sojourn in those quarters they had imbibed copious draughts of various things prohibited to True Believers, and when they returned home from their exile, intoxicated by triumph, forgot that Stamboul was not Paris. They brought with them the habits of the boulevards—habits of thought and speech as well as habits of diet and dress. They imported a scepticism which at first mystified, then scandalised, and finally horrified their coreligionists. Their indifference towards the precepts of the Book, even when it did not manifest itself in open irreverence, caused in their friends a feeling of pained surprise which rapidly developed into one of fierce resentment.

The *hodjas*, embittered by their own special grievances, were not slow in turning these conditions to account. They seized every chance that offered for working upon the prejudices of the Mohammedan masses. They went into the mosques and inflamed the congregations with sermons, the burden of which was the iniquity of the Young Turks and their flagrant violations of the Sacred Law. The members of the Committee were denounced as free-masons and agnostics saturated with Frank infidelity, as vile apostates from the Faith and sworn enemies of

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the Sultan, the supreme guardian of the Faith. When memory failed, the preachers had recourse to imagination. The Committee was charged with the intention of abolishing religion, of converting the mosques into theatres, of superseding the fez by the hat, of selling the Mohammedan women to the *giaours*—no fable was wild enough for the rancour of the orators or the credulity of their audiences.

Presently there came into being an association, the *Jemiyet-i-Mohammedieh* or “League of Mohammed,” which, including some of the enlightened *ulemas* and many of the benighted *hodjas* and *softas*, as well as other malcontents of various colours, had for its object to give cohesion to Mohammedan opposition, to act as a hyphen between the Liberal Union and the reactionaries, and to sow discontent among the rank and file of the army.

In the army the missionaries found the soil fertilised and ready to receive the seed of sedition. Although the Young Turk Revolution had been effected by means of the army, it did not follow that the army consisted of Young Turks. It consisted for the most part of pious and unsophisticated Turkish peasants of the old school—men who, having long suffered from the privations and hardships of an unfeeling tyranny, had hoped to obtain relief by following the leaders who promised to bring about the millennium. And of these men a portion only—the 3rd Army Corps of Macedonia—had been induced to purchase material improvement by sacrificing their traditional loyalty to the Caliph. The 2nd Army Corps of Adrianople had at first not only rejected the advances made by their officers, but had sent a select body of two hundred

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delegates to Constantinople to ask the Sultan whether the Constitution was really in accordance with his wishes. It was not until the Adrianople troops were assured of this that they gave their adhesion to the Committee. In Asia Minor there were other armies, even less deeply imbued with Liberal ideas than their brethren in Europe. The capital itself contained a large garrison of Kurds, Albanians, and Arabs, who had been for years in the Sultan's service and, being pampered by him, were devoted to his person. Of the strength of their devotion and of their want of any other allegiance the Albanians especially had given many proofs. For instance, on Friday, August 10, 1906, when they were already drawn up to escort the Sultan to the *selamlık*, it was announced to them that the ceremony had to be countermanded because his Majesty had been taken suddenly ill. They refused to believe it, suspecting foul play—that Abdul Hamid had been dethroned or assassinated. The aged General Tahir Pasha, their commandant and compatriot—the only man they trusted—came out to assure them that the Padishah was living and reigning, that he was deeply touched by their loyalty, and that he asked them to retire to their barracks. This communication was received with angry groans. The Albanians were not satisfied even with their General's solemn oath on the Koran, and the Sultan himself was obliged to appear next day at one of the windows. The Young Turks had not ventured to do more than decrease the numbers of these formidable prætorians.

For the rest, the Constitution had not yet brought any practical amelioration in the lot of any of the

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soldiers. Under the new *régime* the Turkish privates continued to be as ill paid and as hard worked as they had ever been under the old. The only change was the introduction of reforms which clashed with long-established habits. It was, for instance, the custom in the Turkish army at *reveille* for an officer to go round the barracks asking whether any man—owing to some impurity incurred during the night—stood in need of ablutions, and to allow time for their performance. The Young Turk officers, who, while absorbed in political squabbles, had lost touch with their men, discontinued a practice that the latter regarded as part of their religious duty. In addition, the men complained that their daily devotions were curtailed, and that the officers forbade them to pray for the Sultan. Further, the grey-bearded subalterns who had risen from the ranks (*alaili*) bitterly resented seeing young graduates from the Military School (*mektebli*) promoted over their heads. Lastly, the Young Turks insisted on drill, gun-practice, and other exercises to an extent unprecedented under the slack old system. Thus zeal for efficiency came into collision with tradition, and vested interests combined with venerable sentiments to prepare the minds of the troops for reaction.

As early as the previous November attempts had been made to stir up the garrison of the capital against the Constitution, and the consequent mutinies were only quelled by the prompt action of the authorities. A court-martial on November 17th sentenced one general, commanding the 1st Cavalry Division of the Guard, and a captain to six months'

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imprisonment, and other officers to three years' imprisonment. The specific charge brought against them was that of having instigated a meeting of officers promoted from the ranks to protest against the appointment of officers who had passed through the Military School. The authorities, while punishing the offence, paid no attention to the grievance which had prompted it. On the contrary, anxious to ensure the fidelity of troops which they distrusted yet dared not disband, they appointed four officers from the Military School to command the four regiments of the Guard Division. Matters grew worse as the months went on. The Young Turk officers continued to spend more time in their political clubs than in the barracks. This in itself was detrimental to discipline, but even more demoralising was the part which the troops had been invited to play in the parliamentary crisis of February 13th. That part, as Kiamil Pasha had aptly observed, was reminiscent of the manners of the old Janissaries, and their modern successors could not be blamed for carrying so congenial a *rôle* to its logical conclusion. The authorities again thought to ward off danger by trying gradually to replace the officers and men suspected of reactionary tendencies by persons on whose loyalty they could depend. These measures met with stubborn resistance. At the beginning of March the prætorians who had already given trouble in November refused to receive new officers and recruits or to return to their homes. Instead, they made a demonstration outside the Palace, declaring that their sole wish was to remain in the service of the Sultan, whose authority alone they said that

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they recognised. At the end of the month a fresh mutiny occurred in the Yildiz barracks. The Arabs, objecting to the incorporation of Anatolian troops in their battalion, declined to turn out for morning drill, and, as the efforts of the officers to enforce their orders proved fruitless, it was found necessary to overawe the mutineers by surrounding the barracks with other troops. Nor did the Arabs stand alone. An Albanian battalion showed a disposition to side with the mutineers. Simultaneously with these manifestations of unrest there was carried on an agitation for disbandment, not only in the capital, but also in the provinces. Less than a fortnight before the last-mentioned events two *redif* battalions had mutinied at Yannina, demanding that they should be sent home, as they had passed eight years with the colours. One man was killed and several were wounded before they were reduced to submission. All these demonstrations were rapidly suppressed, but their mere occurrence was symptomatic of a state of things the reverse of satisfactory.

Nor was the discontent confined to the clergy and the army. The whole population showed signs of daily growing disappointment. None of the promises of the Revolution had been fulfilled. The Constitution had been in force for eight months and the millennium had not yet come. The government under the Parliament continued as corrupt, as careless and as oppressive as it had been under the Padishah. Justice was as slow and unsure as ever. The Young Turks had in theory consigned the old administrative machinery to the scrap-heap, but so far they had failed to find a substitute. Fear of

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creating too large a class of malcontents, want of men qualified to replace them, and want of money, kept the vast majority of the old functionaries in their posts. In some places the red fezes had been superseded by white caps, but the reform of the headgear had produced no corresponding reformation in the heads it covered. Even where changes in the *personnel* had been effected they were not accompanied by any change of principles. Dishonest officials had been supplanted by inexperienced officials, and these new men, finding themselves in the ancient environment and afflicted by the ancient impecuniosity, made up in dishonesty what they lacked in capacity.

But if the Constitution had so far brought neither peace nor prosperity to the Empire—even if so highly reputed a panacea had proved as yet powerless against diseases that had grown endemic—it had, at least, supplied the means of exposing them to light more fully and frankly than was formerly possible. The Press was now allowed to discuss subjects worth discussing, and it availed itself of its liberty with all the eagerness of a long-suppressed appetite. The Parliament, too, in the intervals of more exciting topics of debate, dealt with the administrative problems of the Empire. Thanks to these two many-eyed and many-tongued critics of New Turkey, it was possible for the onlooker to see what was going on in the country, even if he saw little that conduced to optimism. All the evidence thus plentifully supplied went to show that the country remained subject to all the exactions and peculations, to all the robberies, public and private,

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consecrated by the tradition of æons. In the capital itself a sarcastic journal declared in January : " Since the establishment of the Constitution and the disappearance of the scourge of the spy, another terror has seized the citizens of Constantinople, and, indeed, all the inhabitants of Turkey : the terror of the robber and burglar. It is impossible to go out into the streets after dark, or to take a boat on the Bosphorus alone : the very boatmen will strip and assassinate you. For this reason you will not find to-day one citizen going out without a revolver in his pocket ready for use. Every quarter of the town has its daily tale of outrages to tell ; one day the scene is a tramcar, another a house, the third a shop. ' And all this is the gift of the Constitution ! ' murmurs the public. We do not agree with this view. The Constitution is not guilty : it is impartial. We wanted freedom, freedom also wanted the criminals. As soon as they got it they multiplied. We did not multiply the policemen. The enemies of society understood better than its protectors the advantages conferred by the Constitution. That is all."

Let us, however, leave the capital and glance round at the provinces, taking for our guides the Press and Parliament of Constantinople, and supplementing, where possible, their records by the evidence of our own eyes.

CHAPTER XI

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FROM Syria a competent observer reported that the conditions of life were such that "even by the most hopeful they can scarcely be regarded as presenting more than an undefined possibility of reform, a possibility upon which a large, if not the larger, proportion of the population does not look with any assurance." The Revolution had brought no blessing to any of the districts from the Mediterranean to Mesopotamia. "Poverty and anarchy," reported the same witness, "are still the prevailing characteristics of the regions bordering the desert road, and the corruption that prevails among the officials of every degree would seem to relegate all improvement to a remote date."

If we move further south we find the prospect equally cheerless. Arabia had been a prey to rebellion since the proclamation of the new *régime*. The trouble began with a compact between two rival sheikhs in the Yemen, who had agreed in order that they might differ more effectively from the common enemy—the Constitution, its authors and its supporters. They denounced the foreign thing as a graceless and godless importation which

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clearly showed that the Turks, who at the best of times were True Believers only after a fashion, had now abjured the faith of the Prophet altogether, and become dogs not a whit less canine than the Christians and Jews with whom they consorted : evil communications corrupt good Mohammedans.

This appeal to religious feeling was strengthened by material grievances. The construction of the Hedjaz Railway—another accursed fruit of infidelity—had deprived the poor inhabitants of the barren regions which it traversed of their main source of subsistence : the transport, entertainment, and spoliation of pilgrims. The disaffection arising from these two causes was, no doubt, fomented by the numerous ministers of Abdul's rule who after the Revolution had been banished to the cities of Arabia. Here was a conjunction of motives acting on the minds of people who have rarely wanted an excuse for turbulence. The result, as might have been expected, was a conflagration that has not yet been extinguished. The hostilities began, in strict conformity to tradition, with an attack on Mecca, organised as a protest against the dismissal and arrest by the Central Government of the Shereef of the holy city—a sanctified sinner who under Abdul Hamid's ægis had attained a great eminence in turpitude, and who enjoyed, on that account, the affection of an army of camel-drivers, muleteers, and other gentry interested in the pilgrim traffic. The rebels proved more than a match for the Imperial forces, which were compelled to fall back on Medina, suffering severe losses during their retreat at the hands of the Bedouins. These, en-

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couraged by victory and impunity, proceeded to attack the newly inaugurated Hedjaz Railway, cutting the telegraph-wires, destroying lines and stations, and slaying the officials. The fame of success and the hope of loot lured to the rebel side even the tribes which had a few weeks before sworn fidelity to the Constitution. A Mahdi arose opportunely to lead, bless, and exploit the insurgents, and under this new stimulus the insurrection spread from the Yemen to Syria in one direction and to Mesopotamia in another. By the end of March, Mosul, Basra, Baghdad, and the whole of the Euphrates plain were the theatre of constant raids and repulses. Even vessels sailing on the Tigris were continually attacked and riddled with bullets, which wounded and killed many passengers. At one time five steamers, two gun-boats, and over two thousand soldiers were held up at Amara, half-way between Baghdad and Basra, by the rebel tribes. Confusion was worse confounded by quarrels among rival sheikhs, and the Ottoman Government proved utterly powerless to prevent or punish their excesses. While the Cabinet in Constantinople discussed the question and drew up plans for the pacification of Arabia, its servants on the spot, unable to control the tribes, tried to derive profit from their turbulence. They set one sheikh against another and fostered their mutual animosities. The very military authorities sent to quell the disturbances were accused of conniving at them for a consideration. Bakshish continued to reign supreme in Baghdad. The only difference between the old state of things and the new was that, whereas formerly the sins of the officials were known only to

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themselves and their partners, now, thanks to a free Press, they became public property and gave rise to public irritation.

In the north we find a similar state of anarchy prevailing among the Kurds. The military caste had taken the oath to the Constitution, but the lower classes showed no sympathy with it. During the autumn of 1908 serious troubles arose between the Kurds and their Armenian neighbours. The authorities at Van tried to reconcile the belligerents, but their efforts only gave to the Kurds a chance for routing their less warlike opponents, destroying their villages and watercourses, burning their crops, laying the fertile valleys waste, and leaving many thousands of Christian peasants in utter want. The very troops that went to help the victims, and who were welcomed by them as deliverers, robbed their hosts and added to the havoc wrought by the Kurds.

The Armenian Press complained bitterly, demanding in vain that an impartial Commission should be sent to inquire into the trouble and mete out even-handed justice. The want of such justice had in the past been the main cause of Armenian distress and the chief motive of the Armenian revolutionary agitation. The autocracy had consistently sided with the lawless Kurds in Asia to the detriment of the Armenians, just as in Europe it had sided with the lawless Albanians to the detriment of the Serbs, and for similar reasons—because both Kurds and Albanians were Mohammedans, and both supplied Abdul Hamid with his most devoted bodyguards. The Young Turks appeared to pursue a similar policy. Not only did they neglect to improve

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the ordinary administration, but they tolerated the most savage outrages upon a defenceless population. Briefly, the attitude of the Government was characterised by a duplicity which, the Armenians said, formed a disheartening contrast to their own sincere enthusiasm for the Constitution. "We want practical proofs of good faith on the part of Young Turkey," they cried, "otherwise we shall be driven to the conclusion that we are again the victims of a satanic design such as well-nigh accomplished our extermination thirteen years ago." It is possible that the Porte did not deserve the charge of disingenuousness brought against it by its critics. Perhaps the Armenians were too harsh and too hasty in their judgment. But their attitude is perfectly intelligible. They are suspicious because they have suffered. They are violent because they are weak.

In western Asia Minor anarchy had at first been staved off; but all the elements of anarchy were present, and arms and ammunition were pouring into the country. All that was needed to set the inflammable material ablaze was a wind of disappointment or fanaticism. Meanwhile the local journals drew attention to the growing alienation between the people and the authorities. After the first few weeks the police had resumed its old arrogant attitude towards the civilian population, whether Christian or Mohammedan, all the Government officials slid back to their old ways of procrastination and speculation, and the law courts to their habitual partiality towards the True Believer when in litigation with an infidel. Outrages by soldiers on the peasants went unpunished, and the weak were once more exposed

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to the tender mercies of the strong. Fear and mistrust of all towards all—those were the salient features of the towns in Anatolia, while the open country, in addition, was harried by a terrible famine.

Throughout the winter of 1908 and the spring of 1909 Constantinople shuddered over the accounts of distress which reached it from the Asiatic *vilayets*. From Erzeroum came heart-rending appeals for the rescue of the thousands that perished for want of food, clothing, and fuel. Similar appeals poured in from Cesarea and Brussa, describing how men, women, and especially children, were either dying or were reduced to skeletons. In the region of Mardin twenty thousand villagers were at the point of starvation. The visitation was due partly to the failure of the crops, partly to the severity of the winter, partly to the absence of any reserve either in kind or in cash, and partly to the depredations already described. The suffering was shared by both Christians and Mohammedans, for hunger makes no invidious distinctions between creeds. But the efforts made in order to relieve it were characterised by a significant distinction. While the Christian missionaries did all that was humanly possible to alleviate the privations endured by the people, the Ottoman Government showed itself anxious to minimise the gravity of the situation, instead of taking energetic steps to improve it—and that, too, though the distress was calculated to diminish not only the financial resources but also the military efficiency of the Empire. It was only in April that the Porte decided to devote a paltry sum of money for the relief of the famine-stricken.

If we turn to the European provinces of the

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Empire we are confronted with a situation not less chaotic, though the chaos there was due to a different set of causes. The Northern Albanians had for some time remained strangely—one might say ominously—quiescent. Immediately on the promulgation of the Constitution a special mission, composed of three religious and four lay members, was despatched by the Albanian Club of Constantinople to explain to the clans the advantages of parliamentary government and to procure the cessation of the inter-tribal feuds. The latter object was attained—a truce does not constitute peace. The everlasting vendetta ceased, and the few Ghegs who disregarded the armistice were handed over to the authorities for punishment. But with regard to the other object, serious difficulties were experienced by the mission. The only notion that the word "Constitution" conveyed to an Albanian hillman was a total and sempiternal exemption from taxation—an illusion which, of course, could not last long. In fact, as soon as the central Government made an attempt to apply the law by demanding taxes, by proclaiming conscription, by requesting the clans to disarm, and by bringing malefactors to book, the Ghegs began to manifest their disillusion in a manner that could neither be misunderstood nor ignored. All the more intense was the disappointment of the clans because the demands made from Constantinople were accompanied by none of the boons that might have rendered them palatable. It is true that some unpopular governors were removed from the districts they had fleeced for years; but the Turkish rule, as a whole, continued in practice to be as tyrannical, as extortionate, and as venal as it had ever been since the

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conquest. Not that the Albanians had any reason to draw an unfavourable comparison between the Turkish officials and their own indigenous notables. The quality of the latter may be judged by one sample. When the truce was arranged between the tribes by a commission of elders, the Mufti of Prishtina, who is actually a deputy in the Ottoman Parliament, was condemned to pay pecuniary compensation for no fewer than eighty murders traced to his instigation—the average price being £T.50 per head, except for the heads of friends, for whose death there is no pardon : the Albanian recognises that a kinsman is a possession due to the caprice of chance, and his loss may be a blessing ; but a friend, being the result of choice, is a treasure above all price.

Moreover, in Albania as in Anatolia, famine came to deepen the normal penury of the clans, while the Christian tribes had a special grievance in the circumstance that they received unfair treatment at the parliamentary elections. Their Mohammedan fellow-countrymen, they said, were allowed to vote whether they paid taxes or not ; they themselves were disqualified if they did not pay the *agham*, or sheep tax. For the rest, all the North Albanians, whether Mohammedans or Christians, viewed with misgivings a movement which, if successful, was calculated to confirm the Ottoman grip over their country. And to all these domestic causes of unrest were added foreign intrigues. North Albania has for many decades been the hunting ground of Austrian political agents, avowed and secret, whose object is to establish the influence of the Dual Monarchy over that part of the Balkan Peninsula, partly as a check on Montenegro,

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and partly as a preparation for Austrian expansion southwards. These agents were not slow to turn the discontent of the Albanians to account in connexion with the Austro-Turkish dispute over the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The result of all these forces was to stir up among the Northern Albanians a ferment which, whether prompted by a home-grown desire for autonomy or by gold imported from abroad, certainly did not conduce to the pacification of the country. Soon the excitement spread to the Sanjak of Novi Bazar, recently evacuated by the Austrian troops, though in that district it assumed the familiar form of a hostility between Mohammedan Albanians and Christian Serbs ; the former, interpreting the Constitution as meaning the removal of the checks imposed by the Powers for the protection of the latter, and the re-establishment of the good old Sacred Law, proceeded to take advantage of the situation.

In Central Albania the Constitution had been by no means unanimously accepted. A notorious chieftain, Issa Bollatin by name, who had long enjoyed Abdul Hamid's favour and gifts, continued to defy the Committee, and the efforts made towards his repression led to an open revolt of the whole district of Dibra. Imperial troops were despatched thither from Monastir, but were compelled to retire with considerable loss. At the time of my visit, the redoubtable chief was still at large, though more than fifty of his strongholds were said to have been destroyed, and his attitude met with more than sympathy among his tribesmen. Issa Bollatin might be a villain, but no true Albanian could withhold

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from him the praise due to a man who remained so staunchly true to his salt.

In Southern Albania and Epirus lawlessness, with all its concomitant outrages of robbery, murder, and arson, seemed to have received an impetus rather than a check after the proclamation of the parliamentary *régime*. The arbitrariness of those who ought to set the example of respect for legality, and the corruption of an administration which had changed only its name and not its ways, encouraged the unruly instincts of the people irrespectively of creed. In one case a Christian named Potetsis was accused to the authorities of having hidden arms. The police—with a total disregard of constitutional formalities—made an attempt to force their way into his house by night. The man escaped, and from a potential became an actual criminal. He forthwith went to the house of his accuser, wounded him, and then fled to the mountains. In another case a Christian schoolmaster named Kremmydas beat two shepherds belonging to a Mohammedan *agha* because they had taken the gun from one of his pupils who, while shooting, had accidentally hit one of their dogs. The shepherds complained to their master, their master complained to the authorities, and the authorities, which habitually wink at far graver offences perpetrated by Mohammedans, sent a whole detachment of troops to arrest the schoolmaster. The latter, suspecting that so formidable a force could not aim simply at his arrest, fired on the soldiers from the window and, having killed two or three, made good his escape to the hills—the favourite health resort of lovers and haters of Justice alike in

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countries where the goddess is so fickle and capricious as she is in Turkey.

In this defiance of a law that has done so little to merit obedience the Christians, as I have shown, vie with their Mohammedan compatriots. But of the two elements the latter have beyond comparison the larger number of crimes to answer for. Accustomed always to go about armed to the teeth, the Mohammedan mountaineers of Southern Albania and Epirus availed themselves of the proclamation of Liberty for a more liberal use of their rifles. One day a band of these brigands attacked the imperial mail near Philippida, killed the postilion and the two gendarmes who acted as escort, and then made off with the booty. Another day a body of Bashi-bazouks from the village of Kotzika ambushed a caravan of Christian merchants of Plesivitsa who were on their way to Philiates. A fight ensued, in which some men on both sides were wounded. On the same day four Christian citizens of the same town were assaulted by a gang of Mohammedans. Another fight ensued, ending in the death of one Christian and one Mohammedan. The Kaimakam hastened to the scene, arrested the surviving Christians, and left the Mohammedans unmolested. The latter, emboldened, called upon their neighbours to attack the town. What the ultimate results of these operations were I could not learn. But a few days later a report reached me that another Mohammedan band had entered the Greek village of Mavron Oros, had besieged the school, and demanded from the village a ransom for the school-boys. The villagers refused to pay, and thereupon the brigands revenged themselves by killing two

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women and two children, wounding another woman and child, and looting the village. Such episodes might be multiplied indefinitely, but they would add nothing to the liveliness of this narrative. They are only valuable as evidence of the failure of the parliamentary panacea to pacify Southern Albania and Epirus. The insecurity which pervaded the whole country and the apathy displayed by the authorities combined to demolish all the hopes that the wretched inhabitants had built upon the Constitution.

In Macedonia I found one solitary sign of improvement—a larger area of land under cultivation—and that was only an indirect effect of the Revolution: the cessation of the inter-racial warfare. The peasants, freed from the fear of the rival bands, were able to till their fields. But in every other respect the province was no better off than it had been. Bakshish continued to be the mainspring of the administration, and blackmail the curse of the unarmed population, while ordinary brigandage flourished even in the environs of Salonica. To all these normal evils the Revolution had added a new one. The local branches of the Young Turk Committee, though ostensibly forbidden to meddle with the responsible authorities, were in reality controlling them after a fashion that excited strong resentment. Even enlightened unofficial Turks were heard to complain that the Committee had established an oppressive oligarchy in the place of the old autocracy, and to declare that, if they had to choose between two evils, they would prefer the familiar tyranny of the Sultan. Here

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and there one also heard the more sinister complaint that the agents of the Committee tried to extort sums of money from prominent Turks by means of threats. I came across a case of this kind at Uskub, where a Turkish notable received a minatory letter demanding £T.500. It is true that the responsible leaders of the Committee, when the matter was brought to their notice, disavowed all responsibility, but their disclaimer did not lessen the painful impression created by the incident.

But the main source of danger under the new, as under the old, *régime* lay in the national animosities which divided the various elements of the population. In the course of a debate on the condition of Macedonia held in the Ottoman Parliament at the beginning of February, Hilmi Pasha had stated that five months earlier the number of revolutionary bands in the province was 225, of which 110 were Bulgarian, 80 Greek, 30 Servian, and 5 Vlach. The proclamation of the Constitution had induced them to suspend their activity, but they had neither surrendered their arms nor broken up their organisations, and it was not long before the peace sworn in July, with, no doubt, considerable mental reservations on all sides, began to degenerate into a hollow truce. Recriminations rapidly succeeded to congratulations, and the ancient enmities, forgotten for a moment, fast regained their normal bitterness. Hilmi Pasha was obliged to confess that, according to the result of an official inquiry instituted in December, one Mohammedan, two Greeks, four Bulgars, and one Vlach had been murdered, and one Greek and five Vlachs wounded, three of the Bulgarian victims

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having fallen by the hand of a Turkish corporal in the market-place of Prilep. The Minister's statements did not err on the side of exaggeration. From all parts of that seismic region were heard mutterings ominously recalling those which preceded the eruption of the anarchy that had devastated Macedonia for eight years.

The Young Turks, as we saw, had endeavoured to exorcise the Macedonian peril by making common cause with the most formidable lord of misrule—the notorious Bulgarian brigand chief Sandansky and the Internal Organisation under his control. The result was that the country districts continued under the sway of the Bulgarian revolutionary committees, the local authorities existing only in name, while the virtual masters were the leaders of the Bulgarian bands, who went on distributing arms, drilling recruits, levying blackmail, and now and then condemning recalcitrant peasants to death. A few illustrations will suffice. In the district of Serres during the month of October three peasants were “executed” at Skratchovo and one village notable at Spatovo because they refused to pay revolutionary taxes, while an imperial tax-collector barely escaped death at the hands of the Bulgarian peasants through the timely arrival of troops. The arrested ringleaders were released through the intervention of the Bulgarian *komitadjis*, and the irritated soldiers vented their anger by beating mercilessly some Greek villagers they met on the way. To the Turk all Christians are “one kind of dirt,” and some should be made to suffer for the sins committed by others. On another occasion, at Uskub, the Bulgarian inhabitants held a

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public meeting in which they displayed a flag bearing a cross upon it, and when the authorities protested, they threatened that they would cause serious trouble if they were not allowed to do as they liked : Constitution meant freedom of conscience. Even simple Bulgarian peasants ventured to browbeat the local governors and to threaten that, if their demands were not immediately granted, they would appeal to "other quarters," while the Bulgarian *voivodes*, or chiefs of bands, enjoyed everywhere an unprecedented influence. One of these, a miscreant notorious for his crimes, Tzole of Banitza, in the Florina district, was habitually received by the Kaimakam of Florina in his office, and was allowed to speak with the authority of a governor to the Greek priests who went there to protest against Bulgarian violence. In one word, the declaration of Bulgaria's independence, the assumption by Prince Ferdinand of the title of "Tsar of the Bulgars," the mobilisation of the Bulgarian army, and the defiant attitude assumed by Bulgaria towards Turkey with perfect impunity during the previous October, had raised the prestige and inflated the arrogance of the Bulgarian population to a degree which the Turkish authorities dared not resent.

The principal sufferers from this state of things were the Greek and Grecophil peasants. The essential cause of quarrel between them and the Bulgars was the antagonism between the Patriarchist and Exarchist parties, which found expression in a dispute about the ownership of the village churches and schools—a dispute before which the Ottoman Government had so far found itself perfectly helpless. Hilmi Pasha had declared in Parliament that "unless

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some definite decision were taken and enforced, outrages and massacres would continue indefinitely." But how could any definite decision be taken and enforced, so long as the Young Turks were disposed to conciliate the Bulgarian party without altogether daring to goad the Greek to despair? The Greeks maintained that the institutions belonged to those who had founded them—namely, the Established Patriarchist Church; the Bulgarian adherents of the dissenting Exarchist Church, relying on the privileged position they enjoyed since the proclamation of the Constitution, claimed that the matter should be left to the vote of the villagers—a mode of solution which, under the euphemism "liberty of conscience," meant the triumph of official favouritism backed by armed terrorism. But both Greeks and Bulgars opposed the suggestion for the appointment of a mixed Parliamentary Commission offered by the Government. In the circumstances, the two sects continued on terms of mutual hostility which frequently led to acts of violence. At Gorentchi, for example, a village near Kastoria, the Exarchist minority of some fifty families, on failing in their repeated attempts to seize the church, adopted last January the device of establishing in it a separate collection; the Greek Metropolitan, who was officiating that day, ordered that the collection should be suppressed, and three Bulgarian *voivodes* who were present incited their followers to a riot. On the matter being brought before the Kaimakam, he decided in favour of the Patriarchist majority. The Bulgars appealed to the Governor-General of the *vilayet*, representing their collection as having a purely charit-

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able purpose. The Governor cut the knot by ordering the church to be closed. The case was typical.

Elsewhere the Greco-Bulgarian feud assumed other forms. In some places Bulgarian chiefs, who in taking up arms against the Greek Church had been impelled by other than patriotic motives, on finding their subsidies stopped by the Bulgarian organisation, abjured the Exarchate and went back to the Patriarchate. Whole communities, or sections of communities, also, which had formerly been terrorised into apostasy, hastened to avail themselves of the momentary cessation of the reign of terror by returning to their allegiance to the Patriarch. The Bulgarian bands could not view these desertions with indifference. A case in point is offered by the village of Zivonia, in the district of Monastir. That community had years ago become Exarchist. Last January a portion of it, led by the village headman, expressed the wish to rejoin the Patriarchist fold. The Bulgarian *voivode*, Traïko of Bernik, went in order to dissuade the villagers from the step, but without success. Thereupon another *voivode*, Leonte by name, went, accompanied with twenty armed *komitadjis* and a number of Exarchist peasants from the environs, and proved more successful. The villagers were convinced of their error at the sight of this force. Even close to the city of Monastir armed *komitadjis* ventured to seize Patriarchist peasants and to prohibit them, on pain of death, from stopping in Greek inns. In short, throughout Central and Southern Macedonia the movement for the promotion of the Bulgarian cause, though no longer carried on by fire and sword, had lost none of its vigour. Cases of open assassina-

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tion were comparatively rare ; but, on the other hand, emissaries of the Bulgarian organisation continued to penetrate into the villages, blackmail was levied on the villagers, and all the methods of persuasion and intimidation, such as the forcible expulsion of teachers and priests under threats of massacre and occasional assaults on notables, remained in full force under the very eyes of the local authorities, which, actuated partly by fear of the Bulgarian bands, partly by fear of the Young Turk Committee, connived at proceedings they could not check.

The upshot was a ferment among the Greek populations which their leaders had the greatest difficulty in restraining. "Why," they said, "should we suffer tamely all these insults and injuries? Does liberty mean liberty for our opponents to persecute us?" But, curiously enough, the Bulgarian populations themselves were far from being satisfied with the condition of things established by the Revolution. A few days before my arrival at Uskub the Bulgarian inhabitants of the town had held a meeting, at which they protested loudly against the conduct of various Kaimakams, giving the names of the official malefactors and full details of the iniquities committed by them, and denounced the Young Turk Committee for not putting a stop to these malpractices. The irritation of the Bulgarian element arose partly from the continuance of the old misrule, partly from the indignation felt by the opponents of Sandansky at the favour shown towards him and his satellites by the Young Turks, and partly from direct discontent with the Young Turk Committee itself. As we saw, during the parliamentary elections the Committee had

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concluded an agreement with the Macedonian Bulgars on the basis of mutual support against the Greek candidates. The Bulgars complained that, while they fulfilled their share of the bargain, the Young Turks broke theirs. The justification of the Turks for their own treachery was their anger at the treacherous conduct of Bulgaria in declaring her independence, annexing the Eastern Roumelia section of the Oriental Railway, and generally dealing a blow at Young Turkey; but this explanation naturally did not satisfy the Bulgars, who, despite the licence allowed them in their struggle with the Greeks, shared the Greek disenchantment.

Nor were the Serbs better pleased with the new era. The sole practical fruit of the Constitution, so far as they were concerned, was to invigorate the Bulgarian propaganda at the expense of the Servian, and, by the withdrawal of foreign interference, to encourage the Albanians in the belief that they could henceforth carry on their depredations in Old Servia without even the shadow of remonstrance. I was, therefore, not surprised to find, on reaching Uskub, that the Servian inhabitants had just held a local parliament in which they decided to refer henceforth all disputes and complaints, not to the Turkish tribunals, as the Young Turks wanted them to do, nor even to their own episcopal courts, as they had hitherto done, but to the Consul of the Servian kingdom, thereby giving a very clear hint of their views on the unification sought by Young Turk patriots.

The Roumanian propaganda was not idle either. Its partisans in the town of Veria assumed daily a more provocative attitude, pelting their Greek fellow-

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townsmen with stones and insults, and on one occasion wounding outside the town with a dagger a Greek village priest who travelled from Niaoussa. The authorities, to whom the victim appealed forthwith, refused to move on his behalf, for they were said to have been acting in collusion with the assailants.

To all these chronic symptoms of the Macedonian disease there had been added a new one since the Constitution. Hilmi Pasha, in enumerating the iniquities of the Christian propagandas, had forgotten to mention the existence of a Mohammedan propaganda. Yet there was one, and its activity might easily have stimulated the Minister's memory, had not other considerations dictated discreet oblivion. The Young Turk Committee had avowed that it owed some of its patriotic inspiration to the example of the rival organisations. One of the military heroes of the Revolution, in the Young Turk play *Nasil Oldu* or *How It came about*—which was written by an officer and produced on the stage of Constantinople last year—is made to say, “Look at the Armenians, the Bulgars, the Greeks, the Serbs, the Vlachs, and even the Albanians—how energetic they are in the service of causes which they regard as just, without caring whether they succeed or fail. They submit to all sorts of sacrifices for the sake of freedom. Night and day they work with all their heart and soul for the realisation of their ideals. They none of them think about women, children, or old men, but they slay all without distinction. They burn villages, they carry off prisoners, they even dare to attack our own armies! It is true that all these actions are savage outrages which I do not, of course, approve

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of, yet, when I consider that they are perpetrated solely and entirely in the prosecution of a patriotic object, I cannot but admire the constancy of character, the strength of the national idea, the tenacity of will, and the self-devotion of the men who perpetrate them. I cannot but envy qualities which arouse the appreciation of every true patriot!"

I found that the Committee had imitated not only the spirit which distinguished these Christian organisations, but also the methods which disgraced them. The whole of the Mohammedan population of Macedonia was armed with Martinis, and the province was divided into districts, each with its number of secretly initiated individuals or local committee, formed with the object of invigorating the Mohammedan and enfeebling the Christian elements. This object was pursued by a variety of means—some of them quite legitimate and others highly reprehensible. Among the former was the establishment of Turkish co-operative associations and the employment of Greek artisans to teach handicrafts to the Mohammedan peasants, accompanied with appeals to the Turkish public to avoid, as far as possible, commercial transactions with the Christians and to patronise as much as possible their own co-religionists. Unfortunately, this laudable competition was not always conducted in a spirit of fairness. The promoters of the movement, conscious of the commercial and industrial superiority of the Christians and despairing of victory, often supplemented peaceful rivalry by brute force, and the authorities naturally aided and abetted them by placing the resources of the State at their disposal. Nor is that all. In each district the local committees had

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under their command armed bands, consisting of rural guards out of work, of outlaws, and all sorts of ruffians of the old *régime*, whose mission it was to overawe the Christian populations. These measures might be described as prompted by the necessity of self-defence. But their adoption by the Committee and their sanction by the authorities were signs of anything rather than of union and progress. They were rather signs of a widening of the breach between the various elements and of the return of conditions worse than the anarchy which prevailed in Macedonia previous to the Revolution.

The Mohammedans themselves were split into two hostile factions—the followers of the “League of Mohammed” and the adherents of the Committee. The League had already its ramifications over the whole of Macedonia. In the eastern districts of the province its moving spirits were one of the professors of the Turkish High School at Serres and the son of the local Mufti—a highly cultured young man who enjoyed a great reputation for ability. Nearly the whole of the Mohammedan population of Demir-Hissar had already been converted to its programme, the main object of which was the restriction of the Constitution within the bounds prescribed by the Sacred Law—that is, the restoration of the old *régime* with certain improvements. The Young Turks were more or less fully informed of these endeavours at reaction, and they manifested their determination to fight their opponents to a finish, no matter under what garb they disguised themselves. Members of the Committee who held posts in the administration and the army enlisted in the police, so

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that they might more easily watch the movements of the enemy. Further, it was decided, early in March, to form an executive committee under the leadership of a captain who had acquired some experience in guerilla warfare by conducting the military operations against the Bulgarian bands. This officer was commissioned to set out, with his detachment of irregulars, on a tour, with a view of keeping the Mohammedan peasantry under the Committee's control, on one hand, and, on the other, of putting to death the persons proscribed by the latter. On March 11th a special envoy sent from the central Committee of Constantinople arrived at Serres, summoned a general meeting of the local members in the military club, and in the course of an impassioned speech, which lasted three hours, urged upon them the need of concord and self-devotion in face of the danger that threatened the Young Turk cause. From Serres the envoy proceeded to other Macedonian towns, everywhere appealing to the Committee's partisans, in the name of patriotism, to resist the intrigues of the reactionaries and remain faithful to their oath.

Such in barest outline was the state of the Empire at the end of last March. In spite of local variations, all the provinces both in Asia and in Europe presented a mournful uniformity of misery. The Constitution had been advertised, like the celebrated balsam of Crackapanoko, as a "never-failing remedy for all human disorders," and as one which "a proper trial allowed, would go near to reanimate the dead." It had so far failed even to cure the merely sick.

CHAPTER XII

THE STORM BURSTS

MEANWHILE the feud in the capital had reached a stage but one step removed from bloodshed. Intrigue ran into intrigue, invective begot invective, and threats doubled upon threats. The fatal step was taken early in April, the victim being an Albanian—Hassan Fehmi, editor of the *Serbesti*, one of the most determined opponents of the Committee. The crime, though the Committee denied all complicity, did not conduce to an improvement in the relations between the rival parties. Five thousand mourners followed the body to the burial-ground, and among them there were many Liberal deputies, many Albanians, and a great number of theological students—all anxious to manifest their indignation at what was generally and justly stigmatised as a dastardly act of political vengeance. Nor did the agitation end with the funeral. The police failed to find the criminal. The Committee was making frantic efforts to restrict the liberty of the Press. The Opposition threw out thinly-veiled hints at reprisals. It was clear that things were fast moving towards a crisis.

The Government, aware of the gathering storm, took some precautions of the kind that Hilmi Pasha

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had once so happily described to me as “des mesures prophylactiques.” My experience of such measures had always been that they were subtly devised to aggravate the disease they were meant to cure. The policy of the Porte had ever been invariable, whether in the hands of the intelligent or of the ignorant, and it had consistently shown that the Turk, however enlightened he might be, was far better fitted by nature and culture for the robust science of the surgeon than for the finer art of the physician. The measures the Government now adopted in order to meet the crisis were in harmony with Turkish character and precedent. The garrison was ordered to be prepared for disturbances—an order which intensified the irritation of the people against whom it was directed. As if that were not enough, in the evening of April 12th Mukhtar Pasha, Commander of the 1st Army Corps—a General gifted with more than the ordinary measure of military want of tact—told the troops to be ready at the word of command to fire on their co-religionists, including even those who wore the turban of the theological teacher or student.

This brutal speech fell as a spark in the midst of the inflammable material. All the forces of disaffection—the Liberal Union, the League of Mohammed, the secret adherents of autocracy, the open advocates of Albanian and Armenian nationalism, and the majority of the Moslem population of Stamboul—decided on instant and concerted action. A great meeting of *ulemas*, *hodjas*, and *softas* was held in the mosque of St. Sophia. Money was distributed among the soldiers by the palace agents. Messages were

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sent from barrack to barrack and a general mutiny was organised during the night.

Early next morning the soldiers imprisoned their Young Turk officers, and a body of them, led by an Albanian corporal and a member of the League of Mohammed, seized the Parliament House. This was the signal for a universal rising. With the exception of four battalions of infantry and some companies of artillery which remained passive, the rest of the garrison—even the Salonica Rifles, the sacred battalion of the Young Turk Revolution which had hitherto been the mainstay of the Committee—hastened to join their brethren in revolt. To these forces were presently added numbers of troops from across the Bosphorus and sailors from the fleet. In a few hours the square of St. Sophia and the adjacent streets of Stamboul, which had witnessed the fraternal jubilations of July, were filled with an excited mob of over twenty thousand armed soldiers and a countless multitude of *softas* and citizens, including every class and age: a mob which showed the intensity of its feelings and the confusion of its ideas by cheering the Constitution and the Sacred Law with lusty indiscrimination. All that could be made out of this demoniacal uproar was that the Albanians demanded vengeance for the murder of their countryman and that the theologians exhorted the multitude to defend the religion of Islam.

A body of lancers sent by Mukhtar Pasha to disperse the mutineers contented itself with firing in the air, thus sparing its comrades and wounding only one or two hapless spectators by accident. At the same time the four battalions that had remained loyal

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massed round the War Office, firing upon all who approached the building. But in the square of St. Sophia all the deputies who dared come to the House were greeted with loud cheers and blasts from bugles and trumpets.

In the midst of this din an ultimatum was drawn up and sent in to the Chamber. The men, besides the general observance of the Sacred Law and the dissolution of the Committee, demanded more specifically the resignation of the Grand Vizier, Hilmi Pasha, of the President of the Chamber, Ahmed Riza, of the Ministers of War and Marine, and—the head of Mukhtar Pasha! This document was presented to the Chamber by a duly chosen delegation of decorous *ulemas*. The deputies begged the delegates to withdraw that the House might discuss their ultimatum. The delegates salaamed and retired. Thereupon followed a great confusion of tongues, which the House called a debate. One hon. member, speaking on behalf of the Committee, declared that to grant the demands of the mutineers was tantamount to hastening the ruin of the country, as concession would only encourage them to further pretensions. Another hon. member retorted that the present was not the proper moment to think of the future, that the chief question was how to ward off the actual danger and avoid a carnage. A third hon. member supported this motion, saying that acquiescence in the wishes of the soldiers was the only plank of salvation. At that point the envoys of the mutineers reappeared in the Chamber and wanted to take part in the debate. They were made, not without difficulty, to understand that their intervention was illegal, and finally they

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were induced to retire. The debate was resumed. Ismail Kemal Bey spoke: "To-day there is no authority in the country, except the few deputies assembled here. It is in us that rests the whole sovereignty of the nation. Let us, therefore, bravely assume the responsibility and deliberate!"

Deliberate! What sort of deliberation was possible to an assembly which felt its liberty restrained and its life menaced by an ignorant rabble armed with twenty thousand keen arguments in the shape of as many bayonets? How can men, or even angels, deliberate in pandemonium? The strident sound of bugles came from outside, mingled with the roar of human voices, softened, but scarcely sweetened, by distance; and this noise paralysed all freedom of thought. Suddenly it was suggested to ask through the telephone what the Government was doing. The Porte replied that the Grand Vizier had gone to the palace with the Minister of War and had not been heard of since. Next the House had the happy thought to ring up Mukhtar Pasha. He gave a list of the forces at his disposal—it was not encouraging. Confusion developed into chaos. Ismail Kemal Bey proposed a vote of want of confidence in the Cabinet—the last resort of a puzzled Parliament. That vote had just been carried, and a good many hon. members considered that the best course would be to send to Yildiz and apprise the Sultan of the decision taken by the House, when some belated deputies arrived, and they protested against a decision in which they had had no voice. At that moment, as if to complete the delirium, the mutineers' delegates, losing their patience, entered the Chamber again,



“ . . . I WANT THE . . . SHACRED LAW ! ”

(From the Turkish comic journal *Kalem*.)

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saying, "Many of our comrades have been killed at the War Office. Blood has been shed. If there is an attack here, more blood will be shed. Beware! Make up your minds without further delay, or we answer for nothing!"

Once more the mutineers yielded to the prayers of the House and retired. But their stern reminder of the value of time had its effect. The House reflected: "Outside in the square of St. Sophia there is a seething mob ready at the slightest provocation to commit the most frightful outrages. There is no sign of any force likely to curb them. Time is flying. The rebellion is spreading. What can we do but submit? 'Tis no shame to submit to overwhelming odds." Even the gods were wont to bow to Necessity, and the hon. members were no gods; but, truth to tell, very poor mortals in mortal fear for their skins. So they submitted, and their decision was at once communicated to the Sultan.

The mutineers had obtained all their demands, except the last—Mukhtar Pasha, together with Hilmi, Ahmed Riza, and other prominent leaders of the Committee, had vanished. Hilmi's place was taken by Tewfik Pasha, a Liberal; Ahmed Riza was temporarily superseded by Ismail Kemal, the moving spirit of the Liberal Union; the Ministers of War and Marine and the Commander of the 1st Army Corps were similarly replaced. No other solution was possible. For in the meantime even the troops at the War Office, which had at first remained faithful to the Committee, had been persuaded by the eloquence of the religious men to make common cause with the mutineers. The Sultan then

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issued a proclamation pardoning all those who had taken part in the mutiny, greeting the soldiers in affectionate terms as "my children," and promising that the Sacred Law should be restored to its pristine supremacy. The troops received the gracious message with great enthusiasm, and, giving up their cheers for the Constitution, betook themselves to the more familiar cry : "*Padishahim chok yasha !*" ("Long live our Padishah !"). Forthwith they formed a procession, and, with a band of music at their head, marched to Yildiz Kiosk to salute the Sultan and to invite him to come to Stamboul and don the green turban in token of the triumph of the Faith.

The full significance of this demonstration was revealed in the evening, when hundreds of the Hamidieh irregular cavalry—fine, fierce-looking Kurds—rushed wildly through the streets on foot, brandishing their naked sabres and frenetically acclaiming Abdul Hamid. These exhibitions of loyalty to the Sultan were accompanied by a tremendous fusillade of joy. Throughout that night and the next day thousands of rioters might be seen and heard running about the streets of the capital, shouting "*Yashassun Sheriat !*" ("Long live the Sacred Law!"), loading their rifles and revolvers and emptying them in the air to the honour of the Sultan and the imminent peril of his peaceful subjects.

Those politicians who had instigated the mutiny as a means to liberating themselves and the country from the constitutional despotism of the Committee must have immediately realised that they had made use of an instrument more dangerous than delicate. It is true, the counter-Revolution had so far proved as

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wonderful in its moderation as the July Revolution had been. The mutineers had displayed that sense of discipline which does not desert the Turk even at moments of the fiercest excitement. The Turk never lets his passions loose on an unarmed population save as the result of orders "from above"—which, of course, does not mean "from heaven." In the present instance, the men, though free from any control, and though they had the capital at their mercy, indulged in no licence whatsoever. On the contrary, they reassured the population—especially the Christians and foreigners—saying to them, "Have no fear. None of you shall be touched!" a promise which, accidents excepted, had been faithfully kept. Patrols had at once been appointed by the mutineers themselves to maintain order in the streets, and no violence was offered to any one except to a few pre-ordained victims. Only one deputy was killed, and that because he was mistaken for another—Hussein Djahid, editor of the *Tanin*, an uncompromising champion of the Committee. Two deputies hurt themselves by falling from the windows of the Chamber; but the mishap was entirely due to their own terror. Of the unpopular Ministers only one was killed and one wounded; the main charge brought against the latter being that he wished to force a European cap upon the sailors. Of the officers only two were shot by the soldiers, and one naval captain was lynched later by his own men because he ordered them to train the guns on Yildiz Kiosk. The cadets of the Military School—an object of special detestation to the mutineers—were given notice to disperse lest there should be an attack on the establishment.

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The only wilful damage inflicted on property consisted in the destruction of the offices of the *Tanin* and the *Shura-i-Ummet*, the two principal organs of the Committee. Even Mukhtar Pasha—for whose blood they thirsted—owed his dramatic escape to the mutineers' faculty for self-restraint. Thousands of them had surrounded his house and began to discharge their rifles upon it. The Pasha saw them coming through the venetian blinds and jumped out of a back window into a neighbouring house, whence he climbed over a wall into another. This happened to belong to a British resident, who at once hoisted the union-jack over it. The Government, as soon as it heard of the incident, ordered the mutineers to desist from their pursuit of the Pasha, and they desisted, thus giving Mukhtar time to escape on board a German boat, which took him to Athens. Further, the imprisoned Young Turk officers—some two thousand five hundred in number—were released the next day by the new commander of the 1st Army Corps, Nazim Pasha, who issued strict orders that they should be allowed to go unmolested, and threatened with severe punishment all soldiers found firing in the streets. The victorious troops obeyed without a murmur, and returned to their barracks like a flock of sheep driven back to its fold. The storm which had arisen so suddenly subsided just as suddenly.

No one seemed eager to make capital out of the movement. The Sultan, instead of using the enthusiasm of the mutineers for his person in order to recover his autocratic power, resisted all counsels to that effect, and promptly renewed his oath of fidelity to the Constitution. The new Government, consist-

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ing of staunch Liberals, publicly pledged itself to continue the development of Parliamentary institutions. The very Union of the *ulemas* published a manifesto to the army, emphasising the Liberal principles of its members, who affirmed that they had always regarded the Constitution as being in complete accord with the Sacred Law, promised to sacrifice their lives, if need were, in defence of the Parliament, and solemnly adjured the soldiers to preserve discipline, "for it is thus," said the *ulemas*, "that the Almighty will grant salvation to the country and happiness in this world and the next."

Yet, for all that, the obscurantist elements had swamped the Liberal elements. How could the restoration of the Sacred Law to its pristine fulness of authority be reconciled with the constitutional principle? The place of the Committee was taken, not by the Liberal Union, but by the League of Mohammed, the true temper of which was expressed not by the measured terms of the enlightened *ulemas'* manifesto, but by the utterances of its truculent organ, the *Volkan*—a paper that wrought immeasurable mischief by the character of the language in which it celebrated the triumph of its party. And that League, it was worth remembering, had behind it the rank and file of the Constantinople army and navy, expurgated of all educated officers, as well as the majority of the armed Mohammedan population, whose fanaticism was inflamed by the secret agents of Yildiz Kiosk, now once more to the front. Scarcely twenty-four hours had passed since the victory of the mutineers, when the city began to swarm with these vile vagabonds. The beggars of Stamboul, who had

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been accustomed under the old *régime* to combine the proceeds of mendicity with the profits of delation, instantly resumed their familiar functions. All the spies and cut-throats had quitted their lurking-places without delay, and were once more engaged in their ancient pursuits. In one word, a movement that had begun partly as a rebellion against the Committee's veiled tyranny had practically ended in a protest against Liberty.

If there was any doubt as to the sinister nature of the spirit the Liberals had assisted in raising, it was soon dispelled by the wholesale massacres of Christians at Adana, Mersina, Antioch, and other parts of Asia Minor, and not less shockingly by the sanguinary excesses which the soldiers, sailors, and *softas*, under the instigation of the reactionary agents, began to commit in the capital itself. The conduct of these men after the mutiny formed a disgusting contrast to the moderation which they had exhibited in the course of it. During the indiscriminate firing in the streets seventeen persons had been killed and over five hundred wounded; but these were mere accidents. The three days following were disgraced by many deliberate crimes. It was said that some two hundred Young Turk officers were murdered in cold blood. In vain did the Chamber urge the cessation of these orgies of brutality. In vain did the enlightened *ulemas* send deputations to the barracks and war-ships inculcating upon the men behaviour more in harmony with the tenets of the Koran and the Sacred Law of Islam. The Liberals had assisted in raising a spirit not easy to lay.

The only satisfaction—and a very poor satisfaction

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—for Ismail Kemal Bey and his associates was that the Committee had been defeated by the same weapons by which it had triumphed over the Liberal Union in February. The defection even of its staunchest supporters—the Salonica Rifles and the marines—showed that it had no roots in the country. The Turkish masses cared nothing for the Committee and a great deal for the Caliph. The fall of the Committee was as swift, and it seemed as final, as its victory had been: “God is not an Albanian,” as the local saying goes; yet in this case he had acted very much like one.

So, at all events, thought the critics of the Committee.

Its friends thought otherwise. The Committee, they said, though, no doubt, discomfited, was not destroyed. So far as its power was concerned, the real capital was not Constantinople, but Salonica. The 1st Army Corps would still have to reckon with the 3rd Army Corps of Macedonia, and probably also with the 2nd Army Corps of Adrianople. All was not yet lost. The counter-revolution was nothing more than a vulgar revolt instigated by knaves, carried out by fools, inspired by no clear political ideals, guided by no definite purpose, supported by no power worth the name. It could not last long.

Events rapidly justified this view.

The Committee's rout was at once followed by a rally. Its provincial branches and the local authorities which they controlled—Salonica, Serres, Monastir, Yannina, and so forth—stoutly refused to recognise the new Government, declaring it to have been

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established by unconstitutional means, and they telegraphed to Constantinople saying that, unless Hilmi Pasha and Ahmed Riza were restored to office and the ringleaders of the mutiny were punished within twelve hours, they would march on the capital at the head of their forces. Nor was this an empty threat. As soon as news of the catastrophe had reached them, all the leading members of the Committee abroad—such as Major Enver Bey, who was at the time military *attaché* at Berlin, and Major Hakki Bey, similarly employed at Vienna—hastened back to Turkey, grimly determined to smash their opponents. Even humble students left their books in Paris and posted home by the quickest route as volunteers. These signs of vitality, as unwelcome as they were unexpected, coupled with the growing fear of the reactionary cut-throats, compelled the enemies of the Committee to modify their tone. On the morning of April 16th all the political groups at Constantinople—the Liberal Union, the League of Mohammed, the Greek, Armenian, Albanian, Bulgarian, Circassian, and Kurdish clubs, the Adrianople, Uskub, and Scutari branches of the Committee, which had recently seceded from the central organisation, as well as representatives of many newspapers—met and decided to fuse themselves into one association under the name of Committee of Ottoman Union, and to send to Salonica a joint embassy in order to explain the situation and try to bring about a reconciliation. But these overtures were sternly rejected. The Committee had never approved of compromise.

CHAPTER XIII

“VENGEANCE! OH, GIVE ME VENGEANCE!”

At the moment when this curious drama was unfolding itself, I happened to be wandering over the Balkans. The news naturally tempted me to hasten to the scene: it is not every day that a man who is dead to the pleasures of the ordinary theatre is offered the chance of witnessing a real human play.

On reaching Belgrade I was informed by the British Minister that a messenger had just arrived from the Embassy at Constantinople with his pocket full of exploded bullets. The programme sounded more promising than ever. So I bought a ticket.

It was a common railway ticket, purchased with common Servian coin and handed to me by a common Servian clerk. But as I put it in my pocket I felt as De Quincey said that he felt when he purchased his first dose of opium.

I was not disappointed. On entering my compartment I found myself in the company of three young men who were provided with tickets from Paris to Constantinople, but whose real destination was Salonica. They spoke to each other in French and tried to pass as Westerners—a pretence well sustained by their peaked caps and fluent French, and

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utterly belied by the rest of their personal appearance. Unkempt, unwashed, and unshaven, with gloves on their hands and no collars round their necks, using *eau de Cologne* where a real Frenchman would have used *eau pure*, my fellow-travellers from the first supplied me with an object of amused speculation as to their identity. The problem solved itself as soon as we came in sight of the Turkish frontier. Immediately my companions threw off their peaked caps, drew their red fezes from their bags and, donning hastily this badge of the Osmanli, leaned out of the window, addressing super-sentimental greetings to the stolid Turkish sentries. They felt no longer obliged to mystify anybody. They were at home. They told me frankly that they were members of the Committee hurrying to its defence.

Presently the train stopped, and a number of Young Turk officers invaded it. My companions embraced and kissed every one of them with effusive impartiality. A Commissary of Police gave us a circumstantial account of the massacre of two thousand schoolboys by the reactionaries at Constantinople. The story was apocryphal, but my friends were not in a critical mood. They were predisposed to believe the worst of their adversaries, and they received the policeman's imaginary horrors with genuine streams of tears and blasphemy.

As we went on, they enabled me to gauge thoroughly the temper which animated a great many of their brethren. It was a revelation. With the ordinary Old Turk I am in sympathy. I have a sort of intuitive comprehension of his character. In his company I experience the repose which every human

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being experiences in the company of normal fellow-beings. In one word, I understand him, in spite of his reticence. For marvellously reticent is the Old Turk. From his mouth never flows that torrent of inanity—so turbid, so tepid, so insipid, and so inexhaustible—which constitutes what we cynically call conversation. In his presence you never feel like a helpless bucket in front of a rattling and remorseless pump. He seems to obey instinctively the golden rule, “Either keep silence or say something that is better than silence.” And from the Old Turk’s point of view—which, I submit, is as good as any other—there are few things better than silence, or safer. To the best of my knowledge, no one has ever been hanged for holding his tongue, whereas many, as is notorious, have suffered grievously for failing to do so. But the Old Turk’s reticence is no more a sign of stupidity than other people’s volubility is a proof of intelligence. You will find that, when the Old Turk deigns to break his silence, his conversation is characterised by an easy, philosophical, well-bred tolerance which inspires confidence.

“You know what the Book says : ‘Observe the stated times of prayer, and distribute alms to the poor.’ This is our religion,” said to me the friendly Cadi I have already quoted.

“And a very good religion it is, O Cadi,” I replied.

“Yes, my son,” he rejoined, “but there are people from the West, lean men clad in black, who would persuade us to abandon our religion. I met one of these gentlemen in Stamboul, and finding him a Father of ignorance—for he knew nothing at all about our religion and very little about his own—I told him

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in the words of the Book: 'Will ye exchange that which is better for that which is worse?' A man may be good and acceptable unto God no matter what his faith is. For my part, I think him who gives up the religion in which he was born and bred either a fool or a reprobate. An honest man never changes his God or forces anybody else to do so."

It is this tolerance, so naïve and beautiful, above all other traits in his character, that makes me like and respect the ordinary Old Turkish gentleman.

I cannot say the same about the ordinary Young Turkish gentleman. I know that it is just now the fashion among British politicians to belaud the Turk as unintelligently as it was a few years ago the fashion to besmirch and decry him. Allah be thanked, I am no politician. I am insignificant enough to be disinterested, and just intelligent enough to be discriminating, in my likes and dislikes. Some Young Turks, whose acquaintance Fate has favoured me with, are admirable men. Others, frankly, I would not meet again. Two out of the three voluble volunteers I travelled with from Belgrade belonged to the latter category.

They impressed me as men suffering from what to me is the least lovely of human infirmities: intolerance; not religious intolerance, mark you, but national intolerance. The distinction was perfectly well understood by the patients themselves. One of them, in answer to another's reference to the Jews as a nationality, had said: "*Il ne faut pas confondre la religion avec la nationalité.*" Yet, personally, if I had to choose between the two varieties of inhumanity, I would much rather deal with a religious than with

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a national fanatic. For your religious fanatic, when all is said, is inspired by some belief in the Absolute. His motto is that heaven is the true butcher's and the beatitude thereof. There is something holy and heroic about his hallucination. There is little of the heroic or the holy about your national lunatic. His hallucination has nothing to do with heaven. His conviction, crude as it is cruel, is that the earth is his nation's and the fulness thereof. After all, if man must be a man-slayer, it is less ignoble a thing to slay one's fellow-creatures for the glory of one's God than for the aggrandisement of one's self : for, disguise it as you like, what is nationalism but primeval egoism writ large ?

When I touched on the national divergencies and consequent differences among the various elements of the Empire, hinting that the errors of intolerance which had brought about the present trouble should not be repeated in the future, my companions silenced me with one haughty denial of the existence of those nationalities. “ There is no longer Turk and Arab, Albanian Greek, Jew, or Armenian,” they said ; “ we are now all Ottomans ! ”

The statement made me think of another I had heard a few years back in the same part of the country. In answer to my inquiries about the state of brigandage in Macedonia, a friend had said : “ There are no longer any brigands in Macedonia : we now call them patriots ! ”

However, I kept the reminiscence to myself, and only asked my companions : “ Whence, then, this counter-movement you are going to suppress ? ”

“ Oh, that,” they replied without hesitation, “ is

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entirely the work of Abdul Hamid. The old ruffian is at the bottom of it all. It is only a plot got up by the Sultan with the sole object to re-establish his tyranny. But he who laughs last laughs best. We spared him and his creatures in July. There is no mercy for him or them now. Abdul Hamid forfeited all titles to mercy the moment he put that poor naval captain to death."

"But," said I, "that captain, according to all the accounts I have seen, was lynched by his own men."

"Yes, but by order of Abdul Hamid," they insisted, and they narrated to me a romantic version of the affair that had reached them. "The captain commanded his men to train the guns on Yildiz. He was perfectly right. The men, corrupted by money from Yildiz, fell upon him and bound him. Then they took him under the walls of Yildiz. The Sultan appeared at a window aloft. 'This traitor,' said the men, 'has commanded us to fire on your Majesty's palace. What are we to do with him?' 'Hang him,' answered the Sultan, and the wretches hanged him. Abdul had then a chance of showing his magnanimity and earning our respect. He missed it. There is no mercy for him. That murder was the last straw. He will have to go—deposition or death. And with him shall go all his creatures. We have lists drawn up with the names and antecedents of every one of them. We shall now make the utmost use of our knowledge. A bloody bath—that is what Constantinople needs to cleanse it once for all from the taint of tyranny."

Proscriptions, after the good old Roman pattern—that was what my young patriots dreamed of.

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I parted with them at Uskub with great pleasure, and next day I continued my journey in the company of far more distinguished members of the Committee—Hussein Djahid, deputy for Constantinople and editor of the *Tanin*, who had narrowly escaped death at the expense of the unfortunate deputy who had been mistaken for him ; and Djavid Bey, deputy for Salonica, who had also been one of the men singled out for destruction. I had already heard of Djavid Bey as one of the founders of the Committee, as the author of several good works on economic subjects, and as a politician of great activity and integrity. I found him also a most interesting companion. His courtesy was that of the perfect Turk. But the vivacity of his manner, the extent of his information, his reputation as a financier, and, above all, the very pronounced South-European type of his delicate face and slender form were characteristics singularly un-Turkish. I was subsequently informed that he belonged to the Dunmehs of Salonica—a Mohammedan community of Hispano-Jewish antecedents—a circumstance which also explained his oratorical powers. Of these I had many proofs as we went on.

At every important station along the line—Uskub, Kuprulu, Gevgeli—large crowds of civilians and soldiers, of laymen and clergymen, both Mohammedan and Christian, were assembled to greet my fellow-travellers, who were overwhelmed with flowers, kisses, and congratulations on their escape. Of course, they had to address these meetings, and Djavid Bey showed that he could handle men as easily as mathematical figures. His speeches moved the audience

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deeply, and his declarations of the Committee's resolve to see things restored to their former state were received with deep-throated *Inshallah! Inshallah!* ("Please God!").

Both my companions gave me a lucid account of the outbreak and of its causes. They did not try to conceal the fact that the movement was not wholly reactionary, but largely the work of men as sincerely attached to Reform as they themselves were. They proved equally candid in admitting that it had been organised with considerable skill, and that, on the whole, it had been carried out with greater moderation than was to be expected. "But," they added, "the Liberal Union has been guilty of a lack of judgment and scruple that may prove their ruin as well as ours. In order to destroy us, they have roused the fanaticism of the masses and destroyed the discipline of the troops. They have roused forces hostile to Liberalism and dangerous to the Empire. They have played with fire. But we will set things right."

The whole journey was a triumphal progress marked by memorable incidents, some of them highly enlightening. As we were on the point of leaving Uskub, for example, a grey-bearded non-commissioned officer, with several medals on his breast, stepped into our compartment and, with tears in his aged eyes, stooped and kissed the hem of my fellow-travellers' coats, murmuring hoarsely: "Vengeance! Oh, give me vengeance!" Djavid Bey explained to me that the poor fellow had had a son, a son-in-law, and another kinsman massacred by the mutineers.

That hoarse murmur, and the look of quiet hatred which accompanied it, recurred to me again and again

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during the next few days. The utterances of the Salonica Committee tallied exactly with those of my young frontier acquaintances. They made no secret of their programme, which was simply to show no pity to any of the persons concerned in their discomfiture. Some of the more moderate talked of a court-martial to deal with the “traitors.” Others promised to hang from the chestnut-trees in the square of St. Sophia their principal opponents, one of whom was Ismail Kemal Bey. One and all were convinced of the wisdom of extremes.

“From the first,” they said, “our fault has been that we made a half-revolution. We sinned by excess of clemency. At the beginning nothing was impossible for us. In the inebriation of victory no one would have dreamed to question the most radical measures ; in any case, no one would have dared to do so. We must not repeat that initial error. We must now strike root and branch, hip and thigh.”

My distinguished fellow-travellers were imbued with the same sentiments. As soon as we reached Salonica they went to the Committee’s Club, and Djavid Bey made an eloquent speech in which he said :

“The reactionaries, by killing two hundred persons, thought that they could annihilate the Liberal spirit of the nation. But we are stronger than they, and henceforth no more sentimentalism on our part. We must inflict upon the guilty the chastisement they deserve, no matter what rank they may belong to. If we let these villains live, these scoundrels without scruple, these wretches who are ready to sell their souls, if we let them continue amassing wealth and

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enjoying it in their bestial manner, it is all over with our country."

In brief, the Committee's watchword was "Revenge." Its members had no doubt that in hating their opponents they hated the enemies of their country, and, while seeking to gratify their own lust for vengeance, they flattered themselves, in perfect good faith, that they only sought to vindicate the cause of Liberty. As to the Sultan, no open declaration was made. But it was easy to see that the least of the evils contemplated in connexion with Abdul Hamid was deposition. Not one of the men I spoke with could brook the slightest suggestion that, perhaps, Abdul Hamid had had less to do with the upheaval than was imagined. All the brutalities committed by the mutineers were unhesitatingly traced to his direct instigation. The Sultan was the arch-demon. Every one of my collocutors took that as an axiom. Every one felt as if he had actually lost his nearest friends at the Sultan's hands, and in the tone with which they all spoke of Abdul Hamid I heard again the grey-bearded subaltern's hoarse murmur, "Vengeance! Oh, give me vengeance!"

Next to the unflinching determination of the Young Turks to do what they meant to do thoroughly, the one thing that impressed me was the extremely dangerous ground on which they trod. It was obvious that they were resolved to win or perish; but neither they nor I had the faintest idea which of the two alternatives was more probable. When my young frontier friends spoke of "a clean sweep," I had asked them, "Have you the necessary broom? How far can you rely on the army?"

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“That we don’t know yet,” they had replied. “Our troops are made of precisely the same stuff as those of our adversaries. They are ignorant and fanatical peasants. It is possible that, if we order them to fire on their co-religionists, they may turn their rifles against us. Once near Constantinople, they may be corrupted by the *hodjas* and other emissaries from the reactionary side. We shall have to take great care to prevent that. Again, if we enter Constantinople, and the Sultan works on the religious feelings of our men by displaying in front of his forces the Prophet’s banner or the Koran, we run a great risk. But we shall have to chance it.”

In Salonica all that I saw and heard confirmed these fears. It is true that the Committee had with it the 3rd Army Corps, which on a war footing is nearly 230,000 men strong. But it was a weapon that cut both ways. As to the 2nd Army Corps at Adrianople, its attitude was ambiguous. Its Young Turk officers had telegraphed that they could not count on their men for more than neutrality, and were, therefore, unable to join their Macedonian associates. But these considerations did not seem to intimidate the Committee. On the very morrow after the counter-revolution, as I have already stated, it had addressed to Constantinople an ultimatum. On arriving at Salonica I found that it had not lost a minute in translating its words into action. The officers of the 3rd Army Corps had immediately met at their club under the presidency of Mahmud Shevket Pasha, Commander-in-Chief and Inspector-General of the Macedonian

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vilayets, who undertook the rôle of General Monk in the Turkish Revolution. He seemed well fitted for the part : short in stature and spare in form, with a lean and mobile face, keen, piercing eyes, a swarthy complexion—all indicative of Arab descent—and lips smiling through an iron-grey beard, Shevket produced upon the onlooker the impression of energy and decision, pleasantly blended with good nature. Under his presidency the officers met and swore to sacrifice their lives, if necessary, for the cause. Directly after taking this oath they set to work to mobilise their forces. The rapidity with which that was done can be illustrated by one example. Major Niazi Bey—who shared with Major Enver Bey the popular honours of the July Revolution—left at once for Monastir by rail. Thence he hurried over the hills to his Albanian birthplace, Resna, and within twenty-four hours he returned at the head of 800 Albanian clansmen—brave but irregular warriors, far more easy to call to arms than to control. Yet Niazi Bey meant to control them. On entering Monastir one or two of the men gave vent to their martial ardour by letting off their rifles. The Major at once stopped the march. “I refuse to lead undisciplined troops,” he said. “Go back to your homes, every one of you, rascals!” The men fell to kissing his hands and imploring pardon. He only agreed to forgive them and resume the command on receiving a solemn promise from his followers that none of them would fire except when ordered to do so. Such were the officers who led that apparently desperate venture.

No men, perhaps, ever faced a crisis with a greater

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uncertainty as to the issue, or with greater coolness. They looked like persons who had all the audacity of gamblers with none of its recklessness. They were prepared to stake their lives, but not to risk their chances. Mad they were with the lust for vengeance, but there was in their madness all the method of sanity. Their fixed idea gave them fixity of purpose, without impairing their faculty for plan. Courage tempered by caution—that was their attitude.

Mahmud Shevket Pasha was the living embodiment of this spirit. On being asked about his programme, he smilingly replied : “ I have been entrusted with a very grave mandate. I will try to prove myself worthy of the confidence reposed in me by the Committee, by the army, and by the nation. We shall act without haste ; we shall enter the capital as victors, if that is necessary ; but we shall respect the rights of all. We shall deal severely with the authors of the mutiny. That is required by justice. We have addressed to the self-styled Government an ultimatum ; we shall exact its literal fulfilment.”

Within twenty-four hours of the outbreak a portion of the avenging army was prepared to march, and the manager of the Salonica-Constantinople railway line had received orders to keep all the available rolling-stock ready for its transportation. Within forty-eight hours—on the night of April 15th—the first contingent of regulars and volunteers, including Christians and Jews, left for the capital ; a second left next day. Two battalions were told off to occupy the strategic position of Kuleli-Burgas—the meeting-point of the Adrianople-Constantinople and Salonica-Constantinople lines—in order to prevent any possi-

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bility of surprise from Adrianople. The rest of the troops were to continue their journey towards Constantinople, under the command of Husni Pasha, to whom was delegated by Mahmud Shevket the conduct of the operations.

On the very same day there happened something which I know not whether I ought to call "a piece of good fortune" or "a piece of good policy." Four battalions of artillery stationed in the Tchataldja lines—which stretch from the Black Sea to the Sea of Marmora and form the only defence of Constantinople on the land side—quitted their quarters, and, led by three young lieutenants, took the train to the capital. Arrived there, they went straight to the square of St. Sophia, and said that the object of their strange visit was to satisfy themselves that the Sultan and the Chamber were safe. Having satisfied themselves about the safety of the Chamber and cheered the deputies, they marched on to the War Office, where they were assured of the Sultan's health and treated to tea and biscuits. After these amenities they returned to their lines at Tchataldja,—to find them occupied by the Salonica troops. The latter, leaving a detachment in possession, proceeded to Spartakeuy, within thirty miles of the capital, where they were joined on the following day by more of their brethren as well as by a number of the cashiered Young Turk officers from Constantinople.

The Young Turks signalised this success by arresting the Mutessarif of Tchataldja and thirty-eight other sympathisers with the counter-revolution, and sending them as prisoners to Salonica, where they were received as the first-fruits of the campaign of vengeance.

CHAPTER XIV

A CAPITAL CONFUSION

THE news of this rapid approach of the avengers—they had reached Tchataldja in twenty-four hours—produced in Constantinople a sensation similar to that produced in Rome when it was announced on the Capitol that Coriolanus led a power against the city, vowing revenge “as spacious as between the youngest and oldest thing.” At first many were inclined to treat the report as an empty rumour, raised only that the weaker sort might wish the Committee home again. But it soon became clear that the news was only too true. The effect was instantaneous. All attacks on Young Turk officers ceased. Many of the rebels began to profess repentance and to blame the religious preachers, the able writers of the *Volkan*, and the other reactionary agents, for having incited them to crime. Some hastened to flee from the punishment that seemed imminent, others tried to avert it by asking for the return of the Military School graduates whom until a few hours ago they execrated and executed. What persuasion had failed to do in the course of half a week, fear achieved in a moment.

Nor was the panic confined to the soldiers. The

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Press, the Porte, the palace, and the Parliament were all thrown into a similar state of perturbation and self-examination. The journals which had hitherto opposed the Committee most valiantly now hastened to sing their recantations most loudly. One protested, on its honour, that its intentions had always been as pure as crystal, another published fulsome eulogies of the Salonica Army, a third demanded the punishment of the Committee's enemies, and so forth. Journalists and politicians were seized with a terror that even the most sympathetic of spectators could not behold without a smile of contempt. "We are all undone," they said, "unless the noble army have mercy." Then the question arose, "Who shall ask it?" The Parliament could not do it for shame; the palace deserved such pity of the Committee as the wolf does of the shepherds; the Press was not dignified enough for an act of humility. The Porte offered its services. A deputation consisting of two generals and a number of *hodjas* was sent to confer with the leaders of the avengers and try to dissuade them from their design. That was the avowed object of the mission; but the presence of the *hodjas* indicated that a subsidiary object was to do the very thing the Young Turks were so afraid of—to corrupt the minds of their followers. But the Young Turks were on their guard. The holy men were searched, and upon one of them were found some suspicious documents. This ambassador was soundly flogged. The others were dismissed unhurt, but empty-handed.

The concentration of the hostile forces continued, and on the following day—April 18th—an advance guard of nine thousand picked men, armed with

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Mausers, bayonets, and revolvers, and led by no fewer than ninety officers, appeared at Kutchuk Tchekmedjé, within eighteen miles' distance from the capital, while simultaneously news came that more troops were on their way from Salonica. The perturbation in Constantinople increased. Parliament now undertook the part of mediator. A second mission, consisting of thirty deputies, was despatched to the Committee's camp, but found the enemy inflexible. The only answer they could obtain was: "No agreement is possible until the villains of the 13th have received their deserts in full measure. That is our first condition. We will stay here until it is fulfilled. If it is not fulfilled——" The perils of that course were pointed out to them. "We do not wish to provoke civil war," they replied; "that would be a crime against the country: it might lead to foreign intervention. But civil war is as unnecessary as it is undesirable. We have the means of occupying Constantinople without firing a shot. Therefore, go back and try to find the authors of the abominable plot of the 13th. Discover the guilty ones, and we will deal with them—be they whosoever they may."

With this answer the second mission returned to the Chamber, and found it in an agony of suspense; for, meanwhile, no fewer than thirty-five telegrams, couched in most uncomfortable terms, had been received from the provinces. Some came from Turkish clubs, others from Armenian, and others still from Kurdish clubs; but they all spoke the same impolite language. What was the Chamber to do? A lively debate ensued, one of the deputies declaring that the Government, the Press, and the Chamber

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had all deceived the nation. The Government had deceived it by affirming that the Constitution had not been violated and that public security reigned. The Press had deceived it by not daring to speak the truth, but following the current of force—one day shouting with the reactionaries and the next with the reformers. The Chamber had deceived it by declaring that the change of Cabinet had been effected in accordance with Constitutional forms, and by not daring to protest even against the murder of one of its own members. In the end it was decided that a third mission should be sent, consisting this time of officers of the General Staff. It was sent, but proved as unfruitful as its predecessors. The Committee said to them, "Mine ears against your suits are stronger than your gates against my force."

This third rebuff plunged Porte, Parliament, and palace into despair. The situation seemed, indeed, hopeless. The enemy were masters of the fortifications. The Government had only the garrison—a body of ex-mutineers, large, but in charge of illiterate officers risen from the ranks—to oppose to the well-equipped force of the Committee—eighteen thousand men armed with Mausers, quick-firing guns, machine-guns, and led by an overwhelming number of the best-educated officers in the Empire—and that force could easily be raised to more than one hundred thousand when the 3rd Army Corps was fully mobilised. From outside no help was to be expected. The 2nd Army Corps, which had so far refused to join the Salonica troops—remaining at Adrianople on guard against the danger of a Bulgarian invasion from the north—had just sent a message the reverse

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of reassuring. The 4th Army Corps, on being summoned from Asia Minor, returned the unexpected and highly discouraging reply that it was, indeed, decided to come to Constantinople, but not as a friend. Whatever might be the feelings of the rank-and-file, the officers were distinctly on the Young Turk side, and the Committee's agents were active all over the Empire in preventing the despatch of reinforcements to the capital. In addition, Anatolia was the theatre of Christian massacres which were trying sorely the temper of the friendliest of foreign Powers. All that the central Government could do, in face of this dreadful situation, was to reiterate its feeble and trite protests of fidelity to the Constitution, and to endeavour to make the country believe those protests. A circular message was forwarded to the provinces, in reply to their hostile telegrams, affirming that "Every one here, from the Sultan downwards, has sworn to respect the Constitution and to defend it to death." Abdul Hamid also publicly declared: "I have always desired, sincerely and seriously, the application of the Constitution. So far it has been kept inviolate by the Senate and the Chamber. Our common aim is the welfare of the nation. May God bless our efforts!" The only party that faced the danger in a manly spirit was the party of the religious obscurantists. The crisis which had paralysed the cultured elements seemed to inspire these benighted apostles with fresh vigour. The agents of the League of Mohammed redoubled their activity. They organised daily meetings, they sent daily emissaries to the barracks and the mosques, and they did all that could be done to revive the drooping wings of reaction.

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But the avenging army did not allow itself to be impressed by any of these proceedings. Its determination remained unshaken. Presently its vanguard pushed to San Stefano, within a stone's-throw of Constantinople, and volunteers from many parts, even from Constantinople, joined it. The capital made no preparation for resistance. The officerless garrison appeared thoroughly disorganised. The nearer the avengers drew the less hope there seemed to be of any successful opposition. In fact, the outposts of the garrison, instead of opposing, had begun to fall back or even to surrender to the enemy. And in so doing they were impelled by a sense of discipline as much as by a sense of their own incompetence. For Nazim Pasha, aware that any collision might be the signal for civil war, had given orders to the troops under his command not to fight except in self-defence. In vain did many courageous *hodjas*, *softas*, and palace missionaries, armed with bundles of inflammatory literature and bottles of inflammatory liquor, try to penetrate into the Committee's camp and sow the good seed of sedition among the men. The Young Turks kept strict watch, many officers acting as privates, and all unfortunate preachers of revolt who fell into their hands received short shrift.

It looked, indeed, as if "desperation were all the policy, strength and defence that Constantinople could make against them." The population was in a state of torpid terror. Not knowing what might happen from one hour to the next, it was ready to believe the worst ; one day it expected the Exchange to be blown up by dynamite, and, when disappointed in this apprehension, it fell back on the hackneyed anticipation of

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a massacre. The Parliament was in a state of panic which it tried to disguise by bullying the Cabinet. The Cabinet protested that it had only accepted power from patriotic motives—to save the Constitution. It had done its best. It implored the House to support it. It threatened to resign if full confidence was refused to it. But how could any effective support be expected from a House divided against itself? How could the deputies give to others the confidence they themselves were so far from feeling? As the avenging army drew nearer, the spirits and the numbers of the Liberals fell, while those of their opponents rose. Some of those who were too deeply compromised hastened to hide themselves for fear of reprisals, others began to vow that they had never had anything to do with the Liberal Union. Virulent recriminations were the order of the day. “You have made fair hands, you and your crafts! You have crafted fair! You have brought a trembling upon Stamboul such as was never so incapable of help!” said one party. The other retorted, “How! was it we? We loved the Committee, but, like beasts and cowardly nobles, gave way unto your clusters who did hoot it out of the city!” Many hon. members who had formerly roared the Committee out were preparing to roar it in again. There was even “a side that would be glad to have this true, which they so seemed to fear.” It was whispered that the very deputies who had gone out to negotiate with the enemy had secretly urged him to quicken his march on the capital. Nay, on the morning of the 19th the Chamber actually met to discuss the question whether

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it should remain in the capital or go over to the enemy's camp. Both courses appeared fraught with equal peril. So the House decided—like Buridan's ass—to stand still. Demoralisation could be carried no further.

While the Parliament trembled and temporised, the avengers pursued tactics that combined the maximum of vigour with the minimum of risk. On the night of the 19th their commander addressed to the inhabitants of Constantinople a manifesto, recapitulating the Committee's interpretation of the mutiny of the 13th, viz., that it had overthrown the Constitution, blackened the face of the nation, and soiled the honour of the army; explaining that the motive which impelled them to march on the capital was to punish the malefactors, to restore the lawful Government to power, and to give a last and decisive lesson to all malcontents and traitors, high and low, lay and clerical; promising to safeguard the innocent, to establish public peace, and to guarantee the happiness of the Empire; and calling upon all soldiers and subalterns to swear upon the Koran that they would henceforth obey their officers and offer no opposition to the chastisement of the villains who, under pretence of defending the Sacred Law, had imperilled the safety of the State.

Nazim Pasha replied to this manifesto by resigning. The announcement of his resignation raised the dread from which the deputies had suffered since the advent of the enemy to the point of delirium. What they dreaded not even themselves were in a position to state clearly. Perhaps they felt that the danger from their own troops, once Nazim's hand removed, was

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even greater than that from the Committee's army. They feared lest they should see their own instruments "melt the city leads upon their pates, and their wives dishonoured to their noses, their temples burned in their cement, and their franchises, whereon they stood, confined into an auger's bore." Anyway, that they were in mortal terror was a fact they made no attempt to disguise. They at once sent a delegation to implore Nazim—their one bulwark between the fear of the worst and its fulfilment—not to leave them in the lurch. The soldier yielded to the entreaties of the statesmen: "Go, masters, get you home; be not dismayed," he said; "go home and show no sign of fear," and, having grimly complimented the hon. members on their pluck, withdrew his resignation.

Meanwhile the avengers had continued to grow in numbers and confidence by the adhesion of the 2nd Army Corps of Adrianople, and by the daily arrival of reinforcements from Salonica as well as of volunteers from everywhere. Their strength was now about 25,000 men with over fifty guns. Conscious of their strength, they moved nearer the capital. On the 20th they made their appearance at Macrikeuy, one of its suburbs, and, seizing the powder magazine, proceeded to invest the city according to a carefully prearranged plan. Heavy artillery, brought up from the Tchataldja fortifications, was trained against the capital. The fright of the ex-mutineers grew with the growth of their danger. Several pocketed their pride, and, going over to the enemy's camp, offered their submission, declaring that they had been misled by palace spies disguised as

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religious teachers, and shedding tears of repentance. Others fled across the Bosphorus to Asia Minor. The rest nursed their terror in sullen inaction. Hundreds of *hodjas* and other reactionary agents also thought it prudent to cross the Bosphorus.

Ismail Kemal Bay, Riza Nour Bey, Ahmed Djelal-eddin Pasha, the Egyptian Prince Aziz Pasha, and some other prominent members of the Liberal Union, too, considered that the time had come for them also to seek change of air abroad. The remainder of the deputies, deserted by the leaders of the Opposition, capitulated with the Committee. Ninety of them went over to San Stefano, on the 21st, to asseverate their fidelity to the Constitution, and joined the late President of the Chamber, Ahmed Riza, who had now emerged from his hiding-place. They were soon followed by the rest of the House, and next day the Senate met the Chamber in the Yacht Club. Their respective Presidents embraced each other in public, amid the applause of a large crowd, and then the two bodies, fused into one National Assembly, held a secret session, the fruit of which was a manifesto sanctioning the mandate of the Salonica Army to act as an instrument of vengeance. The aim of the avengers, the document said, was to destroy despotism, to restore the Constitution, and to punish the guilty in conformity with the prescriptions of the Sacred Law ; their advance on the capital was in obedience to the wishes of the nation ; therefore, all loyal citizens owed them submission : those who refused it should be treated as traitors. The fleet, most of whose officers and men had already taken the oath of fidelity demanded by the Committee, sent word that

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it was at the disposal of a Parliament backed by so formidable a force. The Prefect of the capital and his subordinates also went in a body to San Stefano to salute the winning side.

The Sultan's own Ministers, together with the Sheikh-al-Islam and Nazim Pasha, now convinced that the only alternative to a sanguinary collision that might provoke foreign intervention was submission to the Committee, entered into negotiations with Mahmud Shevket Pasha, who had just assumed personal command of the besieging army. The result of these negotiations became at once manifest. The Government arrested about sixty *softas* and placed all known agitators under police surveillance, while Nazim Pasha sent out to the investing force fifteen thousand rations and two hundred tents. The only thing that still remained to complete the triumph of the avengers was the surrender of Abdul Hamid.

CHAPTER XV

THE LAST "SELAMLİK"

WHAT was Abdul Hamid doing during these five days? His position was tragic in the strictest sense of the word. He who had ruled and ruined a whole Empire for thirty-three years as few autocrats had ever been able to do had, since that accursed 24th of July, 1908, been tossed about like a rotten, rudderless old boat turned adrift on the high sea. He who had been accustomed all his life to command had been forced to obey. He had found his familiar part of tyrant all of a sudden grown out-of-date, and he was made in his old age to play the part of a Constitutional monarch—a part abhorrent to his nature, offensive to his sense of dignity, and utterly at variance with his principles and his habits. Yet he had thrown himself into it with a zest and played it with an *aplomb* that might have done credit to a much younger actor. Had he not, as soon as he became persuaded of the futility of resistance, hastened to submit to the inevitable with a grace such as is only given to the great? Had he not, with his usual aversion to doing things by halves, declared time and again that he was glad of the opportunity afforded him in his old age for granting to his beloved subjects the liberties which he

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had consumed his life in intending to grant them? Had he not gravely informed foreign Ambassadors and others—including the Young Turks themselves—that the Revolution was his own work? Had he not described himself in public as "President of the Committee of Union and Progress"? Had he not feasted the deputies in his palace and had he not promised to build them a House out of his own pocket? Had he not sacrificed his feelings and suppressed his fears by consenting to open the Parliament in person? In brief, had he not placed himself at the head of the new order of things with an alacrity that might almost be mistaken for sincerity?

The Young Turks themselves had not at first withdrawn from him the meed of admiration due to a great actor. No matter what their sufferings at his hands may have been, they had consented to regard him as the head of the nation. The Committee, it is true, had politely declined his proffered presidency. It had installed in Yildiz Kiosk men of its own choosing to keep an eye on his doings and an ear on his sayings. In front of Yildiz Kiosk it had stationed a battleship to remind him of its own strength. But, for all that, the Sultan, half-captive though he was, remained for them, as for all Turks, the Padishah, the Prophet's vicar on earth. Who could forget the enthusiasm of the crowds when Abdul Hamid drove to his Friday devotions for the first time after the promulgation of the Constitution, unattended by his usual troops and adorned with the red and white badge of Liberty? Who could forget the emotion of the deputies themselves at that memorable banquet when they cheered their host heartily and covered his hands

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and his beard with kisses and tears? Many had then said that this sovereign, so clever and so versatile, would never again attempt to rule despotically, but, freed from the baneful influence of his former favourites, would take an honourable place as the leader of a New Turkey. At the head of his people, he would restore the Ottoman nation to its old glory and power.

What had Abdul Hamid done to forfeit the nation's confidence? Throughout that anxious week he had been bandied about from pillar to post. One day he was asked to swear fidelity to the Sheriat, the next he was asked to swear fidelity to the Constitution, and again he was asked to swear fidelity to both the Sheriat and the Constitution in the same breath. He did it all, and did it well; for had he not spent most of his time since that accursed 24th of July in swearing? Of course, he knew it was all nonsense. He knew that the same mind could hardly be faithful to the well-defined traditions of the past and to the nebulous aspirations for the future at one and the same time without exposing itself to the ridicule of thoughtful persons. But what would you? He had no longer thoughtful persons to deal with. All the thoughtful persons he had been in the habit of dealing with—the Izzets, the Melhamés, and the rest of them—were dispersed to the four corners of Europe or had been consigned to a better world. The persons he had to deal with now were Parliamentarians—men vastly foolish; and he dealt with them according to their folly. He played the game in conformity with the rules they themselves had drawn up. What more did the Young Turks want?

They accused him of being the instigator of the

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counter-revolution. Was ever accusation more ridiculous? What earthly motive could he have to change an order of things that suited him so well? Everybody called him selfish. Well, then, he might be trusted to know what was best for himself. And he knew that the Constitution, whatever it might mean for the country, meant rest for himself. It had relieved him from the cares and responsibilities of personal rule. It also meant peace and security for himself. Now, peace and security were the two blessings he had always striven after. He had never been a shaker of things. He had never been an adventurer. He had always been a typical Oriental. He was ready to fight when occasion arose. But he was not the man to go out of his way to court or to create the occasion for fighting. The god of peace, if there be one, had had no more importunate worshipper than Abdul Hamid: "Give peace in my time, O Allah; peace with honour, if possible; but, in any case, peace!" That had been his unuttered prayer through life. It is a prayer that can be made with perfect impunity. But in Abdul's case it had not remained wholly unanswered. Notwithstanding the storms through which the Ottoman Empire had passed under his steering, his reign, compared with the reigns of previous Sultans, had been a period of peace—peace without honour, it is true, but none the less peace. The same wish had also governed his private life. He had consistently acted with a single-minded devotion to the principle of self-preservation. It may be that *propter vitam vivendi perdidit causas*; but that is entirely a matter of point of view. It certainly had never entered Abdul's head that any-

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thing could be dearer than life: *semper animam prætulit pudori*. On the whole, he had succeeded. Many were the plots woven against him in his own palace. He had escaped them all, and after thirty-three years' tyranny he still lived.

Yet his life had hardly been worth living until the Revolution. It must be confessed that at first he had entertained some fears: the Constitution was such a new experiment, and the Young Turks such strange and unaccountable creatures. But familiarity had bred confidence. For the first time, after many years of concealment and trepidation, he had dared to show himself to his people. His person had never been safer than since he had discarded the disreputable and disagreeable means by which he had formerly found it necessary to guard it. In liberating his people he had given himself liberty. He had come to realise from personal experience the truth that the master is never really free till he has liberated his slave. If by so doing he had lost his sense of political omnipotence, he had gained a new sense of personal security. This is not a mere *a priori* argument. Individuals who had access to the Sultan have assured me that Abdul was a changed man since the Revolution. The terror that haunted him had vanished, and he who had only grinned for thirty-three years was beginning to learn how to laugh. His laughter was good to hear. It sounded as if it really came from the heart—not a light heart, to be sure, yet a heart not wholly ignorant of joy. One of these privileged mortals synopsised this transformation in the homely phrase, "Why, the man was actually beginning to put on flesh!"

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Now, since last Tuesday, this sense of security, too, had been taken from the wretched Abdul, through no fault of his own. The Committee would have it that it was his fault. But, granting that Abdul was a thoroughly selfish man, what inducement had he to jeopardise the novel safety he was just beginning to enjoy? Besides, assuming that Abdul was as shrewd as he was selfish—and, whatever his deficiencies might be, nobody had ever denied the Sultan shrewdness—why should he have risked anything by precipitating a catastrophe that, he could see with the fraction of an eye, was coming of its own accord? He had only to wait for a few months more, and the parliamentary strife would have reached such a pitch that all true patriots would have implored him to save the country by resuming the power he had resigned and learnt to do without. It was only a question of waiting a little, and the apple would have fallen into his imperial lap of its own rottenness. His obvious policy, if he wanted to recover his absolutism, was a policy of idleness, and Abdul never was at fault in matters of policy.

Lastly, had the Sultan really instigated the outbreak, would he have remained passive all those days? True, the enemy outside had the advantage in point of leadership and equipment; but the garrison of the capital was superior in numbers and could draw to an almost unlimited extent upon the Mohammedan population both of the capital and of the provinces. All that these forces needed was the word of command, and if Abdul wanted to use them for his own ends, all he had to do was to show his head encircled in a green turban. At his nod an

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overwhelming mass of armed believers would have risen like one man in defence of the Caliph. The very troops that the Committee led against him would have turned their rifles against their leaders. Why did he neglect to make use of the irresistible weapon Allah had placed in his hand? Instead, turning a deaf ear to the advice of zealous partisans, he contented himself with protesting his innocence, and in proof thereof he ordered his household troops and the garrison of Constantinople not to fire a shot against the forces of the Committee. Nay, he went so far as to cause a special train of provisions to be sent to the besiegers' camp and the Grand Vizier to state that "His Sublime Majesty awaits benevolently the arrival of the so-called constitutional army. He has nothing to lose, gain, or fear, since his Sublimity is for the Constitution and its supreme guardian."¹

While making these public declarations, the Sultan did not neglect less direct and more familiar devices for proving his innocence and conciliating his enemies. I heard it stated, when in Constantinople, that his physician, Nouredin Pasha, was charged with a delicate mission of this sort to a Young Turk officer named Remzi Bey. He proposed to him, in the Sultan's name, marriage to a palace-bred damsel of

¹ I am perfectly well aware that Mahmud Shevket Pasha alleges to have in his possession documentary evidence which shows that Abdul Hamid had fomented the mutiny by scattering gold among the troops, and that he had even planned a massacre of Europeans in Constantinople as a means of provoking foreign intervention. But until he publishes that evidence I may be forgiven for treating his statements with the same seriousness as the myriad other unsubstantiated allegations I heard from partisans of the Committee at Salonica and Constantinople.

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fifteen years of age—the damsel to be chosen by him—and any sum of money he would care to ask for, if he would plead Abdul Hamid's case with the Committee and convince them that his Majesty was a total stranger to the movement of April 13th. However, it was no secret to any well-informed observer that the Committee were determined to get rid of Abdul Hamid at all costs. That had been the intention of some of the leading members even in July, 1908. They considered that the maintenance of the crafty old autocrat on the throne was incompatible with the safety of the Constitution. But the proposal had been overridden at the time by the opposition of the more moderate section. The present, however, was too good an opportunity to be lost for putting out of the way a man who, no matter how harmless his attitude might be, seemed destined by his personality and his past to continue forming a centre round which the reactionary forces would always rally. He was considered as the representative *par excellence* of Old Turkey and his disappearance as indispensable for the safety of New Turkey.

So widely spread was this impression that some people even affirmed that the Sultan himself, worn out by the emotions of that terrible week, had expressed the wish to forestall deposition by a voluntary abdication in favour of his younger brother, Reshad Mohammed. Nay, on the 19th, a rumour got abroad in Constantinople that Abdul Hamid had actually abdicated, and it stirred the population out of its torpor into a fever of nervous excitement. Everywhere groups discussed the news, and the supply of "special editions" could scarcely meet the demand.

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This report speedily gave way to another: the Sultan had taken refuge in the British Embassy. An immense crowd gathered at once outside that Embassy. This report, in its turn, was superseded by a third: the Sultan had taken refuge on board a Russian boat, or the Young Turks had given him till 10 p.m. to abdicate, and the Russian Ambassador conducted the negotiations, while a Russian warship lay in the Bosphorus ready to carry the Sultan away. Immediately the crowds rushed to the Russian Embassy. Again, it was affirmed that the German Ambassador had gone to the Young Turks to beg them, in the name of the Kaiser, to spare the Sultan's life, that meanwhile the Sheikh-ul-Islam was busy drawing up a *fatva*, or sentence, of his deposition, and that Reshad Mohammed had been advised to be prepared to succeed. But all these rumours were premature.

Abdul Hamid was, no doubt, thoroughly frightened. He loved his life, his throne, and his money. All three were in peril. Yet, presumably conscious of his innocence, he contrived to keep up a very creditable semblance of courage. To one of his confidants who urged him to resign his throne in order to retain his life and his money, he replied: "I would resign with pleasure in favour of one of my sons, but never in favour of my brother or of one of my nephews. None of them are fit to maintain the prestige of the throne of Osman. For this reason I will remain in my post, and, if need be, I will die like an Emperor." To another he said: "My life is in the hands of Allah. I am always ready to die." When abdication was suggested to him semi-officially, he refused to discuss the question save as the result of

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an inquiry into his conduct carried on in conformity with the prescriptions of the Sacred Law.

The avengers were obliged to take the Caliph's opinion as to his own fate into serious consideration, for it was an opinion backed by potential forces—military, popular, and religious—which they could more easily appreciate than defy. The sentiments of the Mohammedan masses, both within and without the Empire, apart, there was left in the capital itself a sufficient power of stubborn loyalty which might at any moment be goaded into desperate resistance. Although some of the soldiers, as we saw, had been deeply impressed by the danger that threatened them, the majority of the garrison obstinately refused to yield to fear or reason. Their obstinacy was, perhaps, due partly to their ignorance. It was said that agitators had misled them into the belief that the hostile army consisted of no more than five thousand brigands, led by ruffians who had been bribed by the infidels to overthrow the Commander of the Faithful. Be that as it may, when the highest ecclesiastical dignitaries—the Sheikh-ul-Islam and his secretary, the Fetva-Emini—accompanied by several officers of the Staff, visited the barracks in order to induce the soldiers to swear fidelity to the Constitution, most of them replied that they would do so only if the officers, on their part, swore implicit obedience to the Sultan. Even those who took the oath showed clearly that they were incapable of conceiving any loyalty except to the Sultan's person. The emissaries tried to explain the meaning of the oath to them by the following catechism :

“ Who feeds and clothes you ? ”

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The examiners expected to hear "The nation." The answer they obtained was :

"The Sultan!"

"Yes, yes," they went on, "but the Sultan himself receives the money necessary for your subsistence from the nation. Therefore you owe obedience to the nation, that is to say, to the Parliament. Do you understand?"

The poor fellows shook their heads in helpless perplexity: what was this new thing, Parliament, that was said to be bigger than the Padishah? How could that be?

The soldiers' impregnable stupidity forced upon the Committee the necessity of caution. The annals of Turkey are rich in repetitions of one episode: whenever the sovereign was confronted with a magnate who either did, or might, rebel, but who was too powerful to be attacked openly, he invariably had recourse to treachery. The pasha was loaded with presents and promises, all his suspicions were lulled to sleep by exceptional marks of imperial favour, and when the wretch was lured within reach of the bow-string, he was made to pay for his credulity. This stratagem occurs so frequently in Turkish history that one wonders how could there be found any Turk simple enough to be deceived by it. Yet it had never been known to fail. The Young Turks now took a leaf out of their own history. The first thing needful was the occupation of Constantinople. Once masters of the capital, the avengers would be able to work out their will upon Abdul. Meanwhile it was expedient to lull his fears and those of his partisans to sleep; but, at the same time, it was necessary to

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prepare the popular mind for his fall. Here was a problem that would have taxed Western wit to utter bankruptcy. But the diplomatic genius of the East found no difficulty in solving it.

On one hand, the Press was moved to demand Abdul Hamid's deposition. The Turkish journal *Hilal*, that had just sprung up, began the campaign with a lengthy and learned tirade from the inspired pen of the *hodja* Mustafa Assim, a clerical member of Parliament, who undertook to demonstrate that Abdul Hamid had never been a Caliph such as is prescribed by the Sacred Law of Islam. His cruelty and his crimes had long ago exceeded the limit imposed by the Sheriat. The writer ended his argument with a quotation of the answer given by the *ulemas* of Baghdad many centuries ago to the Mongol emperor Hulagu: "A sovereign infidel, but just, is preferable to a sovereign that is a True Believer, but unjust."

The hint was taken up by the rest of the Constantinople journals—Turkish, Greek, Armenian and others. They all joined in a chorus of denunciation. Some adjured the Sultan to abdicate, others spoke of his deposition as a foregone conclusion. In addition to his old crimes there was cited, or invented, a new misdeed that rendered him unworthy to occupy the throne for another minute. It was said that he had invited Austria to invade Macedonia so that the Young Turk army might be compelled to raise the siege. This story made a profound impression upon the public. "Abdul Hamid," said the wiseacres, "has at last laid bare his true character; he does not scruple to sell the Empire to strangers, provided he

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can save his own skin. Down with Abdul Hamid, the miscreant Caliph ! ”

While the Press was raising this cry, the responsible leaders of Young Turk policy were singing a totally different tune. They vigorously repudiated the bare possibility of the Sultan's dethronement, and they assiduously disseminated reports of an impending reconciliation and compromise.

The National Assembly at San Stefano was known to be discussing the momentous question secretly, but when Mahmud Shevket Pasha issued his last manifesto there was in it not a word as to the Sultan's fate. Meanwhile the besieging army—now over thirty thousand strong, with seventy guns—had pushed to the very gates of the capital, and a general attack was imminent. This was the position on Thursday, April 22nd, and everybody in Constantinople felt certain that the decisive blow would fall on the following day—Friday.

At dawn of that day Nazim Pasha, the commander of the 1st Army Corps, went to San Stefano to warn his friend the enemy that a large proportion of the garrison remained faithful to the Sultan, that the Yildiz troops had received on the previous night a largesse of £5 and a hundred cartridges each, and that it was, therefore, advisable to redouble the dose of duplicity. The warning was acted upon in a manner that should earn for the Young Turks an honourable niche in the Temple of Diplomacy. Immediately Mahmud Shevket Pasha drew up a proclamation offering a free pardon to all soldiers who submitted and threatening with condign punishment the traitors “who had spread a report that the investing army

The Last "Selamlık"

has arrived in order to dethrone the Sultan. We," added this distinguished soldier, who yet seems to have missed his vocation, "categorically deny the charge." This document was received by the Grand Vizier at 7 a.m., and soon afterwards was communicated to Abdul Hamid by Shevket himself. Politicians could not, of course, let themselves be outshone by an honest soldier in their own sphere of insincerity. Consequently, while Ahmed Riza, President of the Chamber, declared in private that Abdul Hamid could not remain on the throne for more than two days longer, the National Assembly penned and forwarded to the palace a telegram stating that "it had heard with regret of rumours imputing to it the intention to depose his Majesty, whose person was sacred" !

Now, Abdul was no tyro in diplomacy, yet how could he distrust these solemn, spontaneous, and unanimous professions of goodwill? The whole history of Turkey, and more especially the history of his own reign, might have told him that professions often are to be interpreted like dreams. But apparently human beings—even the craftiest of them—are incapable of profiting by the past. At all events, in this case hope once more triumphed over experience. Abdul's spirits revived, and, with a light heart and an elastic step, he mounted the carriage which was to take him to the mosque for the Friday prayers. Abdul had participated in many ceremonies of that kind ; but no *selamlık*, with the exception of the first after the promulgation of the Constitution, had been attended by demonstrations more gratifying to a sovereign. Dense crowds filled the streets through which the imperial *cortège* passed, and as the

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Sultan, accompanied by the Grand Vizier and escorted by his white horse bodyguard, drove between them, he was received with a tremendous outburst of cheers. Abdul's heart was touched, and it was remembered afterwards that his pallid face had rarely looked so happy and bright. He little suspected that it was to be his last *selamlık*, that his ears would never again be gladdened by the cry "*Padishahim chok yasha!*" How could he? even at that very moment the Grand Vizier communicated to the diplomatic corps, assembled to witness the ceremony, that the President of the Senate had sent from San Stefano a telegram expressing devotion to the Sultan.

CHAPTER XVI

EXIT ABDUL

WHILE the Sultan was praying in the mosque, the besiegers resumed their forward march, occupied the suburbs Macrikeuy, Yediculé, Kumcapu, and the guard station of Sirkedji, penetrated into Stamboul, and, profiting by the absence of the Sultan's cavalry at the *selamlık*, took possession of their barracks. A battalion that attempted to recover them was driven off by a sharp fire. A mob of marines and other ex-mutineers, maddened by the nearness of their peril, tried to break into the Arsenal in order to arm themselves. It was too late. The invaders pushed on. By 6 p.m. the barracks of Daout Pasha and Ramis Tchiflik were surrounded. The garrison of three thousand five hundred men offered some resistance, but was soon forced to capitulate. The fugitives at once spread the alarm to all the other barracks in Stamboul, and though these, acting on orders received from the War Office, remained passive, there ensued the usual panic. The Kurdish element had threatened to reply to the move of the Macedonian troops by a general pillage of the city. The unarmed population consequently hastened to close their shops and to rush homewards. From

Turkey in Transition

Stamboul the news and the panic spread to Pera. The whole of Constantinople on either side of the Golden Horn spent a sleepless night, counting the hours which would bring daylight—and Allah only knew what besides.

At last the dawn began to mark with a white line the dome-crowned hills of Stamboul and the cypressed horizon of Scutari; but the lower parts were still enveloped in the grey mists of the Bosphorus. Suddenly the clouds lifted, and the stillness was broken by the thunder of artillery, the rattle of rifles, and the hoarse shouts from thousands of throats.

During the night the main body of the avengers had crept up from the suburbs, and at that moment it was pouring into Stamboul through all its gates, their maxims silencing the small opposition offered by those who ventured to disobey the orders of their commander. Again the fanatics proved the courage of their fanaticism. While the soldiers laid down their arms, the *softas* offered everywhere a resistance that knew neither fear nor scruple. At one of the theological seminaries in Stamboul, after exchanging some shots with the assailants, the students hoisted the white flag, but when the Young Turks entered the college they fell furiously upon them, hacking them to pieces with axes. Thereupon the commandant summoned some pieces of artillery, which destroyed both the college and its inmates. After a few more experiences of this kind, the invaders proceeded to seize all the *hodjas* and *softas* who had taken refuge in the mosques, killing those whom they caught inciting the troops or the populace to resistance, and preserving with difficulty the others from the ven-

Exit Abdul

geance of their exasperated followers, in order to keep them for regular punishment later on. In this way Stamboul was occupied with very little bloodshed.

The only serious difficulty the avengers met with was on the other side of the Golden Horn. At the yellow and white barracks of Taksim and Tashkishla, near the Bosphorus, an obstinate fusillade, punctuated by the roar of cannon, went on for some six hours, causing the death of several hundreds on both sides. Again and again the enemy was driven back by the fire that poured down upon them from the windows. But finally their artillery and their superior tactics prevailed over the gunless and officerless valour of the defenders, who, when their barracks had been riddled with bullets, dismantled of their window frames and shaken by shells, were obliged to surrender. Yildiz Kiosk took small part in the fighting. The Young Turk forces, though they wisely refrained from attacking the Caliph's residence, had been well disposed over the surrounding points of vantage, and the household troops, seeing that it was impossible to dislodge their guns, remained quiescent. Lengthy negotiations were carried on, and towards evening most of the garrison capitulated, while the rest fled, loaded with rifles and cartridges, across the Bosphorus.

The capitulation of Yildiz brought all resistance to an end. The avengers, when night fell, were undisputed masters of Constantinople. Many thousands of the men who had provoked their wrath were prisoners in their hands. The Sultan was in their power. Yet their vengeance was to be as methodical as their victory had been rapid. Mahmud Shevket Pasha carried out the first item of his published programme by placing

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the city in a state of siege. Patrols were told off to maintain order in the streets, all stragglers who were found wandering about were captured and disarmed, all individuals who were caught indulging in pillage were summarily shot, and by this means tranquillity was restored.

Immediately the news of the Committee's victory was telegraphed to all parts of the Empire, and everywhere it was received with rejoicings, genuine or counterfeit, but, in any case, loud : the powers that be have never lacked in Turkey a popular support as wide as it is shallow. All its parliamentary members who were still dispersed in the provinces hastened to return to their posts. The Chamber and Senate, which had prudently remained at San Stefano while there were bullets flying and scimitars flashing in Stamboul, lost no time in resuming their old quarters in the square of St. Sophia, as soon as they were assured that they could do so safely. Of this there could be no doubt now. Constantinople in a state of siege was as tranquil as a city of the dead. It was forbidden to the civilians to bear arms, and all those who possessed such were ordered, under severe penalties, to give them up. It was forbidden to them to run in the streets in the daytime, or even to walk there after dark. It was forbidden to them to do nothing, on pain of being treated as vagrants. The shopkeepers, therefore, opened their shops, terrified housewives opened their windows wide, and the very dogs settled down upon the cobbles, yawning and yelping and snapping at the flies as if nothing unusual had happened.

Mahmud Shevket Pasha was saluted by the Press

Exit Abdul

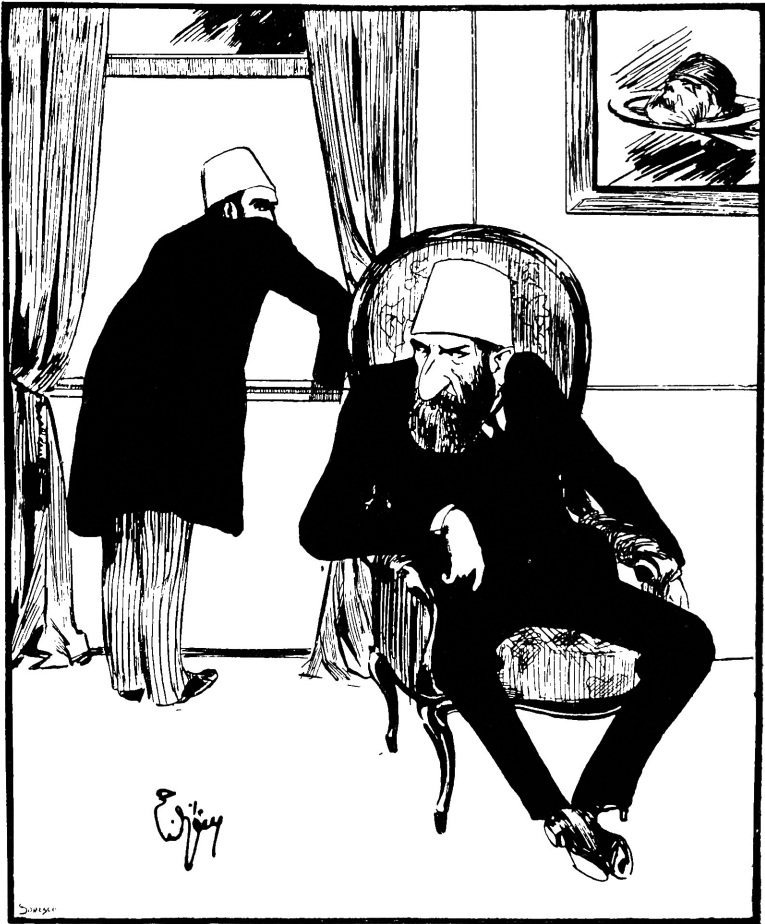
as *Fatih Sanı*, or Second Conqueror, of Constantinople; and both the capital and the Empire were placed under a military dictatorship thinly disguised in a constitutional garb—Mahmud Shevket Pasha, the Dictator, exercising his power through the National Assembly. The most urgent question that still remained open was the fate of Abdul Hamid. The Press resumed its violent campaign against the Sultan, with an improving unanimity. The Committee's spokesman, the *Osmanlı*, enumerated the calamities Turkey owed to his rule, and the list of his iniquities was supplemented by the *İkdam*, the spokesman of the Liberal Union. The whole of Abdul's past life was ransacked for proofs of his turpitude. With a strange oblivion or ignorance of the history of Turkey for generations before Abdul's advent on this planet, the decay of the Empire was unhesitatingly and unreservedly traced to his malign agency; and he was more specifically charged with the Committee's discomfiture of the 13th, which had been so signally avenged by the success of the 24th. The indictment was enforced by a multitude of statements which easily passed for evidence. All sorts of sins committed by his courtiers were placed to Abdul's personal discredit, and the sum of condemnation was swelled by sins that had never been committed at all.

One journal wrote: "Abdul's name deserves to rank with the names of Caligula and Nero. He is the execrable sovereign who, thinking more about his personal absolutism than about the integrity of his Empire, let loose the Russo-Turkish War of 1877 in order to destroy the Constitution. He was the

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organiser of the massacres where perished three hundred thousand (*sic*) Armenians under the sabres of the Hamidian horse, the clubs of Kurdish ruffians disguised as gendarmes, and the sticks and stones of the same mob which the other day, incited and paid by the palace spies, brought about the counter-revolution. All the leaders of the Liberal movement have been exiled by Abdul Hamid, together with ten thousand young men, educated in the military, law, or medical schools, who, suspected of Occidental ideas, have been put to death or banished to the wild regions of Armenia, Arabia, and Tripoli. The Sultan is a coward. He fled from kiosk to kiosk in the park of Yildiz in order to elude the avengers, who, he knew, were resolved to make him expiate his crimes. When faced with the revolt of the army and the victory of the Young Turks, he fell flat on the ground, awaiting the just sentence that hangs over his head. Until that sentence is carried out, the constitutional victory must be regarded as a failure!"

Parliament pretended to be engaged in a serious examination of these charges. But no one doubted that the Sultan's guilt would be proved to the complete satisfaction of all those who wished to see it proved. As a matter of fact, it was stated that a hundred and fifty members of the National Assembly had already voted for his dethronement in the secret session held at San Stefano the previous Thursday, and it was an open secret that the *fetva* sanctioning that act had been signed by the Sheikh-ul-Islam on the Friday. Immediately after the capture of the capital the portrait of Abdul's brother and heir, Reshad Mohammed, was sold in the streets together



ABDUL. WHAT DO THEY WANT? IS IT THE HEAD OF SOME GRAND VIZIER, OR YOURS? TELL THEM IT IS GRANTED.

SECRETARY. . . .

ABDUL. ARE YOU DUMB, OR WHAT? . . . OH! ARE THEY BY ANY CHANCE ASKING FOR MY ——— ?

SECRETARY (ASIDE). IT HAS TAKEN HIM TIME, BUT HE'S GOT IT AT LAST!

(From the Turkish comic journal *Kalem*.)

Exit Abdul

with songs of Liberty, and the funeral of the officers and men of the victorious army who had fallen during the fight furnished an occasion for manifestations hostile to Abdul. The officers who attended the obsequies of their brethren shouted "Down with the Sultan! May the Sultan be destroyed!" and the men replied, "*Inshallah! Inshallah!*" ("Please God!").

This chorus of metropolitan execration evoked a sympathetic response from the Committee's provincial branches. On the night of the 26th the Mayor of Salonica sent, in the name of the population, to the President of the National Assembly a telegram declaring: "Abdul Hamid, who for thirty-three years has exposed the fatherland to the mercy of infamous scoundrels, who has consented to the deportation of thousands of patriots, who, after having been pardoned by the nation, broke his oath and provoked the destruction of hundreds of honest men, is no longer recognised by the nation as its sovereign. We therefore declare most emphatically that, should he be not dethroned at once, in conformity with the sacred ordinances of the Sheriat and the universal will of the nation, we shall rise in arms to attain that legitimate end with the assistance of our sacred and glorious army."

Abdul heard the storm raging round Yildiz, yet he showed no inclination to surrender. Although denuded of its defenders since the 24th, the palace which had witnessed so many sensational scenes appeared determined to provide a final sensation by holding out as the last citadel of despotism. Eighteen battalions surrounded it, guns commanded it, yet the besiegers dared not cross its enclosure for fear of some act of despair on the part of the monarch brought to bay.

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But all these expectations proved vain. Before the evening of the 26th the palace had been occupied by the enemy, and the Sultan's position, whether he trembled as his detractors averred or not, certainly was pitiable beyond description. Some of his principal *aides-de-camp*, among them the aged Albanian General Tahir Pasha, were murdered, some of his chief eunuchs were insulted and wounded before they were carried off as prisoners to the War Office. Most of his wives had fled across the Bosphorus to the hills of Scutari. His favourite son Burhaneddin, who had so largely contributed to Abdul's calamities, lay in hiding. Of the thousands of courtiers who once crowded the corridors of the immense palace there remained only a few valets, cooks, eunuchs, gardeners, bodyguards, and scribes. The rest had either fled or been forcibly dispersed by the victors. It was reported that the Sultan himself, on seeing that it was all over, had said to his servants: "I am a man of ill-luck. Go and leave a ship that is sinking." He was taken at his word. Abdul Hamid was now a prisoner in his own palace. Three of the most prominent Young Turk officers—Enver Bey, Niazi Bey, and Djemal Bey—dressed as privates, volunteered to keep the old man under supervision.

Things remained in this state until mid-day of the 27th, when the Sheikh-ul-Islam and his secretary were summoned before the National Assembly to read out the fatal *fetva*. It was couched in the conventional form:—

"Question: If Zeid,¹ Imam of the Faithful, after

¹ Zeid is a legal phantom corresponding to the John Doe and Richard Roe of English judicial fiction.

Exit Abdul

having caused certain holy books to be burned, appropriated public estates contrary to the Sacred Law, killed, imprisoned, and banished many of his subjects, and, after having perpetrated all sorts of other abominations, swore to re-enter on the path of righteousness, but broke his oath and raised a civil war ; if from many parts of the country came messages declaring that they consider the aforesaid Zeid as deposed ; and if it were beyond doubt that his preservation would be prejudicial, while his deposition might be beneficial—is it lawful either to ask him to abdicate his office of Iman and Sultan or to dethrone him according as men competent and wise may think best ?

“ Answer : Yes.”

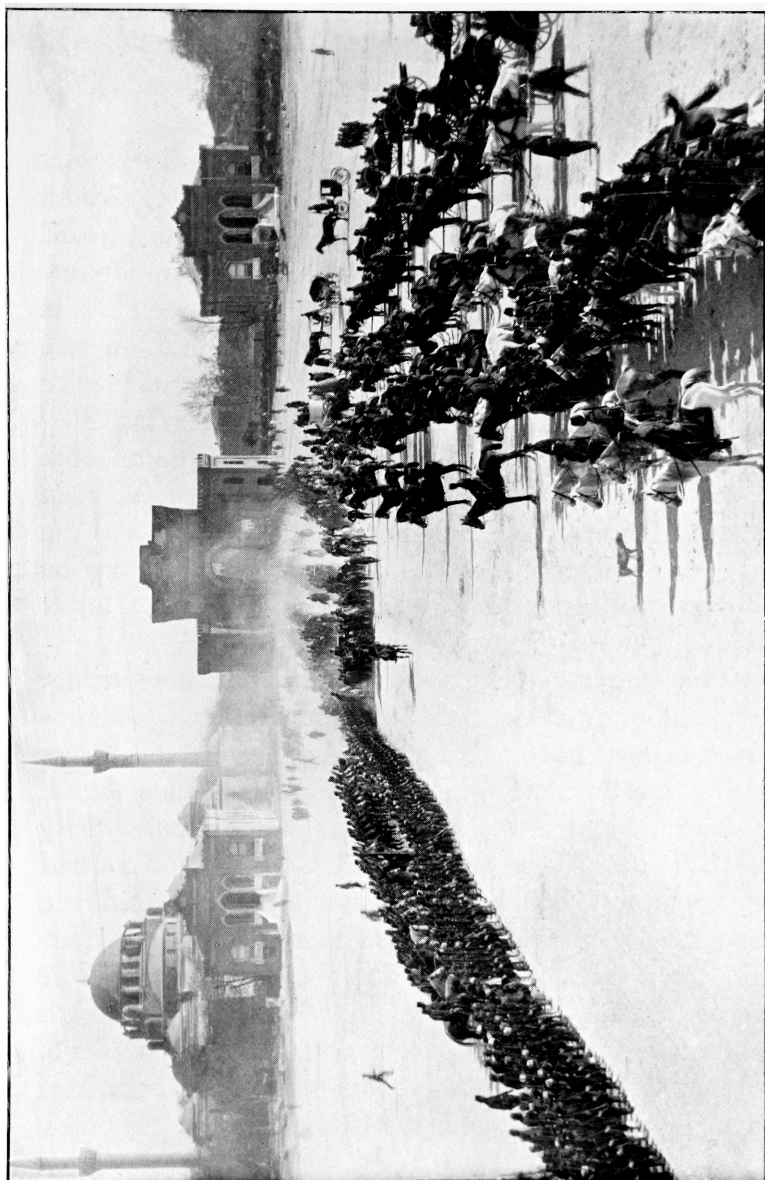
The decision taken, no time was lost in carrying it out. Reshad Mohammed was at once communicated with, and he drove in state to the War Office, where the oath of fidelity to the Constitution and the Sheriat was administered to him, in the presence of the troops, senators, deputies, and ambassadors assembled. The ceremony began with a reading of the *fetva* which proclaimed the fall of Abdul Hamid, then followed the proclamation of Reshad, under the name of Mohammed V., as Caliph and sovereign of the Osmanli. After receiving the congratulations of the bystanders, the new monarch paid his homage to the Prophet's mantle, and then returned to his palace of Dolma Bagtche, which had for so many years been his prison. This ceremony was scarcely over when the forts of the capital began to roar a salvo of one hundred and one gunshots, and their roar was repeated throughout the Empire, to say nothing of the speeches, cheers, bands, flags, and the indiscriminate

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letting off of firearms everywhere : " Long live the new Sultan ! Long live the Committee ! Long live the army ! " resounded in every city, and most loudly of all in the versatile square of St. Sophia.

Meanwhile a delegation consisting of two senators and two deputies was appointed to bear to Abdul Hamid the news of his fall. Many accounts I heard at Constantinople as to how he received the announcement. The points upon which they all agreed are as follows : The delegates found the ex-Sultan in one of the kiosks of Yildiz. When the Sheikh-ul-Islam's sentence and the resolution of the National Assembly were read to him, he looked for a moment stupefied. Then he said quietly : " I was prepared for it : such was my kismet. My only wish is that my life and the lives of my family may be spared, and that I may be allowed to reside in the Tcheragan palace ; for I should like to die where I was born."

This simple version seems to me quite convincing. The elaborate details about Abdul's craven lamentations which have obtained currency in the Press strike me as more graphic than authentic. At all events, I could find no evidence of their authenticity in Stamboul. It was natural that men who had suffered at Abdul's hands should have seized the opportunity of presenting him in the most unfavourable light when they could do so with impunity. The whole Press of the Empire for weeks afterwards was ablaze with invectives, execrations, and caricatures of the monarch at whose mere frown the brilliant writers would have fainted a few days before. In Salonica, when the glad tidings of his fall reached that city, Djelal Bey, of the *Zeman*, harangued the crowd from



THE NEW SULTAN RETURNING FROM THE CEREMONY OF TAKING THE OATH AT THE WAR OFFICE.

Exit Abdul

a balcony and in words breathing journalistic fire condemned to death the " execrable tyrant who had made a whole nation groan in horror during one-third of a century." He was followed by many other brilliant orators, all of whom spoke in the same vindictive strain, to the immense delight of the multitude. It was all perfectly human. Abdul had made himself hateful by his tyranny and contemptible by his failure.

The ex-monarch's prayer that he might be allowed to end his days in the Tcheragan palace was not granted. The Young Turks, no doubt, felt that it would not be safe to keep the disgraced Caliph in Constantinople, and they decided to send him to Salonica, the stronghold of their party. A special train was ordered, and on the following night Abdul Hamid—henceforth a simple Effendi—left, accompanied by two of his youngest sons, four wives and seven ladies in waiting, a few eunuchs and servants, and an escort of Macedonian troops. Whatever his prostration may, or may not, have been when the blow fell, the ex-Sultan seemed, on leaving his capital, to have completely recovered his self-possession, his good-humour, and his good manners. He courteously made the ladies step into the train first, and, with true Oriental anxiety for keeping up appearances, he was heard to say, "I am not going to Salonica as a prisoner, but as a guest of the 3rd Army Corps." On arriving at Salonica, also, he produced upon all who saw him the impression of a man marvellously capable of hiding his mortification under a mask of consummate dignity. He graciously saluted the military and civil officers who received him at the railway station, as well as those who received him at

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the villa that was assigned to him as a habitation. He offered his hand to Hadi Pasha, the acting commander of the 3rd Army Corps, and, raising the Pasha's hand to his breast, he pronounced the Mohammedan greeting "*Merhaba.*" Then he entered the house with a firm step, and, after a few minutes' rest, sat down to a dinner to which he did ample justice. He even remembered having heard from Hilmi Pasha about the excellence of a certain spring in the neighbourhood, and asked that he should be provided with drinking water from it, just as a fastidious connoisseur in wine might ask for a certain celebrated brand. The repast over, he stood at one of the windows for a few minutes gazing on the sombre pine grove that surrounds his new home. Then he retired to bed and slept the sleep of the stoical.

The same attitude of serene nonchalance he maintained next day. He rose early in the morning and spent hours exploring the various apartments of the house, suggesting changes, and consuming an enormous number of the favourite brand of cigarettes he had brought with him from Constantinople. It was only on the following Friday, when he recalled, or one of his wives reminded him of the fact, that it was the day of the *selamlik*, that he had an access of melancholy. For hours he sat in an easy chair lost in meditation. Visions of the gorgeous processions of which he had for a long series of years been the central figure on that day apparently rose up before his mind's eye in sardonic contrast with his present condition. His memory must have dwelt with especial bitterness on the last *selamlik*, when he was

Exit Abdul

so cruelly deceived. After a while, he asked that a private place should be prepared for him that he might perform his devotions in solitude.

For the rest, he seemed to have resigned himself to his new *rôle* as a private gentleman with the same facility with which he had already adapted himself to his *rôle* as a constitutional monarch. Before many days had elapsed he expressed the wish that some more ladies of his harem, that some of his favourite hens, three cows, and his pet cat should be sent to him from Yildiz, and that the bath-rooms of the villa should be modified in accordance with his old-fashioned notions. He also asked for more water and gas and for various articles of furniture. All these wishes were fulfilled, and the man who had been accustomed to a household of 350 chamberlains, secretaries and *aides-de-camp*, 370 ladies in waiting and slaves, 127 eunuchs, 160 sons and daughters, 400 gendarmes, and thousands of bodyguards, did not appear to be conscious of the change. He seemed to be as contented with his villa, his three cows, and his cat as any retired grocer. If true philosophy consists in taking the vicissitudes of life with perfect imperturbability, Abdul Hamid must be pronounced a great philosopher.

The Government has made to the ex-Sultan an allowance of £T.1,000 a month—a liberal return for the fortune of which they robbed him. That fortune consisted, according to the estimates of the military authorities, of property of the value of £T.1,600,000 seized at Yildiz, and of lands, mines, houses of the value of £T.925,000. In addition, Abdul Hamid had some £T.5,000,000 deposited in foreign banks. This

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sum could not be touched, for the banks refused to give it up unless the ex-Sultan was tried by a regular court and his fortune confiscated. The Young Turks at first talked of bringing him before such a court, but they have not yet done so ; the only charge on which he could be tried—his alleged participation in the outbreak of April 13th—being apparently incapable of proof. They have, however, brought to bear all the pressure they could for obtaining from him a voluntary surrender of those deposits. Abdul Hamid was naturally very reluctant to part with what he considered the one guarantee of longevity ; for, once all his gold was squeezed out of him, what would be the use of keeping an embarrassing ex-Sultan alive ? But I understand that he has lately yielded. If so, I should not be surprised to hear one of these days that he has met with a fatal accident, or that he has succumbed to some sudden illness, or that he has perished while trying to escape. Fatal accidents are not infrequent in this world, the Salonica climate is not very healthy at certain seasons of the year, and the position of the Villa Allatini, far from the town and near the sea, appears deliberately to invite attempts at escape.

Meanwhile, Abdul Hamid at Salonica is certainly better off than Napoleon was at St. Helena. He has been treated with rather more lenience than he had any right to expect. For a tyrant he undoubtedly had been in the broadest and vilest sense of the term. Many of his predecessors had been cruel despots or reckless spendthrifts, but none of them had united so much cruelty and cupidity together or had so consistently employed their talents for the furtherance of

Exit Abdul

personal ends regardless of the public interest. Their arbitrariness had been desultory. Abdul Hamid had made of despotism a scientific instrument carefully adjusted to the preservation of the sovereign's absolute power by the extermination of all possible obstacles. In his anxiety to rule without a rival he played with the destinies and the resources of the Empire, signed disastrous treaties, and consigned to death, to exile, and to torture thousands of his own subjects. All this may freely be admitted, yet was Abdul a bad man?

I do not know. In fact, I do not know what people mean by "a bad man." Personally, far though I have travelled, I have never met one. What I have met, in the course of my peregrinations through various countries and classes, are thousands of men and women who love themselves better than they love their neighbours. The ordinary man is an individualist, however little he may know it. It is only when individualism develops beyond the normal that it becomes personality. And then we get our great heroes, our great saints, and our great criminals—in one word, our men of genius. Abdul Hamid was one of them. It has been said that genius is a disease. If so, Abdul suffered from an excessive development of the ego. Where the ordinary egoist hesitates, he was confident. He may have thought of his country's welfare; but he thought of his own more, and, when confronted with the necessity of choosing between the two, he unhesitatingly chose the latter. He would sacrifice without hesitation or remorse an æon of public prosperity for one week's personal security. He was an egoist of the largest, most unsparing,

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and most unscrupulous type. He was a man of genius.

His actions often appeared capricious, inconsistent, and incoherent to the casual spectator. And in truth Abdul was a strange compound of contradictory qualities which repelled and fascinated by turns. Avarice and extravagance, meanness and magnificence, courage and cowardice, cruelty and tenderness were all mysteriously mingled in his incomprehensible composition. Although extremely wilful and obstinate, he could be extremely supple and pliant at times. Proud and domineering by nature, he could yet show himself very humble and even obsequious when he liked. On the eve of his accession, when Midhat Pasha announced to him that he was selected to succeed the unfortunate Mourad, Abdul offered to kiss the Pasha's hand.

"I will never allow that a Caliph should kiss my hand," said the Pasha, drawing back.

"I am not yet one," replied Abdul Hamid, humbling himself more and more before the man he later on put to death. Quite recently, during the famous banquet he gave to the members of the Ottoman Parliament, he did not hesitate to fill with his own hand the glass of Ahmed Riza, the President of the Chamber, whom a few years earlier he had condemned to death.

Many doctors had pronounced Abdul Hamid neuropathic, yet no man could control his nerves better. He could be irresponsible as a child and sophisticated as a Machiavelli by turns. When alone with his courtiers he was known to have playfully thrust the late Mazhar Pasha, Prefect of Constanti-

Exit Abdul

nople, into the pond in the park of Yildiz. When with foreign ambassadors he was a pattern of diplomatic gravity—pre-eminently a man of subtle and sober combinations. When entertaining foreign ladies he never indulged in puerile pranks, but he discussed Chopin, Beethoven, and Wagner. His adaptability to his company was not so much the result of a deliberate policy as that of intuitive perception. It was this gift, coupled with an astonishing memory for names and faces, that enabled Abdul to captivate with very little effort all those who came into contact with him. The wife of a gentleman who had frequent opportunities of studying Abdul at close quarters dwelt to me upon what she called the “magnetism” of the ex-Sultan’s eye. “There was,” she said, “some indescribable power in it. He could make men do anything he pleased. He could induce a model of probity to commit the most atrocious villainies, and he could convert his greatest enemies and victims into obedient servants, whenever he chose to exert his fatal charm.”

There was something of the feminine and the feline about Abdul. No wonder that he was a mystery to mere men. Not even his most intimate courtiers could honestly boast that they had plumbed that complex personality. Not one of them could ever tell what Abdul thought about anything. He was inscrutable. The movements of his mind were dark as Erebus. His thoughts and his motives seemed to travel an *iter tenebricosum*—a path secret, tortuous, deep, subterranean, which baffled research and rendered pursuit ludicrous. One of his courtiers only, the Grand Vizier Mohammed Rushdi Pasha,

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once ventured to boast, "It took me seventeen years to know Sultan Abdul Aziz; seventeen days have been enough to give me an insight into Abdul Hamid." Abdul never pardoned the Pasha for his mendacity.

It is hardly necessary to add that Abdul Hamid never had a friend or tried to make one. His distrust of human nature was too profound for friendship. His relations with his favourites were based on the principle of mutual exploitation. They were wholly innocent of feelings of affection or gratitude. Hence his reputation of being a person of a cunning, cold, calculating temperament. If the child is truly the father of the man, much in Abdul's character may be accounted for by his childhood. Human nature, like Indian corn, needs for its full development a judicious mixture of sunshine and shade. Abdul, according to all accounts, seems to have had too little sunshine and far too much shade in his childhood. As a boy he showed a great indifference to the companionship and pursuits of his brothers, and no capacity for adapting himself to their ways. He had little taste for games and none of the ordinary boy's genial, instinctive love of joy. Of children's passions, any more than of play-things, he had scarcely any. He loved to stand aloof in some dark corner—a little, pale-faced, sad-eyed, lonely ghost of a boy—wistfully watching his brothers at play, but evincing no desire to join them. He was a shy, taciturn, over-sensitive young creature and, as such creatures usually are, he was misunderstood. His shyness was mistaken for misanthropy, his taciturnity for coldness, his over-sensitiveness for moroseness. This misinterpretation must inevitably have soured

Exit Abdul

his temper, stunted his moral growth, and deepened his distrust of his fellow-beings.

Throughout his life Abdul Hamid had given his confidence to no man, and he had earned no man's confidence. He used men and abused them, but he never put any faith in them. He respected nobody and suspected everybody. This disposition, fostered by a voracious reading of the works of Alexandre Dumas, Eugène Sue, Gaboriau and other books of the same kind, made him see everywhere intrigues, stratagems, and plots. He believed his life to be constantly in danger, and he would construe the most trifling incident into a deliberate insult. A single careless gesture, a single unguarded word, was sufficient to ensure the ruin of the person who was guilty of it. One of his Ministers spent all his life in exile for having, during an audience, leaned on his sword. Another spent many years in compulsory idleness for having contributed to a magazine a monograph on the glowworm, which the Turks call *yildiz-bendjegi* (star-worm). Abdul saw in the name a hidden allusion to himself—the Worm of Yildiz!

Indeed, all the superficial inconsistencies and contradictions in Abdul Hamid's character may be traced to this deep-lying suspiciousness, which proved the bane of his own life, the cause of death for many of his subjects, and the livelihood of a legion of spies. For many years the Padishah either made his own bed or did not go to bed at all, preferring to lie down on sofas, and never in the same room on two consecutive nights. Even when he caught his spies weaving plots out of their own imagination, he forgave them with a grim sort of humour. One day a

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Minister demanded from Abdul the punishment of an informer whose inventive genius had caused diplomatic complications. Abdul replied :

"This fellow is an impostor, as you say, and he certainly deserves the chastisement you ask for him. But I will not chastise him. I do not wish to set a bad example. In his eagerness to save my life he has created a whole plot out of his own head. If I punished him for his zeal, that might cool the zeal of the others, and then, when a real plot came to their knowledge, they would hesitate to divulge it. Let the wretch go."

And yet this coward, who feared to sleep in a bed made by other than his own hands, was not afraid to walk through the park of Yildiz at night alone, when he had ample reason to suspect that the shadow of every tree might conceal an assassin. Again, this clever and uncompromising sceptic was capable of a credulity that could not have been surpassed by the most stupid and superstitious of his wives. As is well known, he kept in his palace a wizard, Ebul Huda by name, who flourished on Abdul's credulity as abundantly as his spies flourished on his suspiciousness. Here is an example. Some five years ago Abdul Hamid saw in a dream that he was borne aloft by a luminous chariot drawn by thirty winged horses. He woke up and immediately sent for Ebul Huda, from whom he demanded an interpretation of the dream. The wizard asked for twenty-four hours in order to consult his spirits. Next day he came with the result of the consultation: "Tell your master," the spirits had said, "that his dream is a happy omen. The luminous chariot is his reign, the thirty winged horses are the

Exit Abdul

thirty years of glorious life he will yet enjoy. Inform him also that his guardian spirits are only too anxious to protect him in all his enterprises." Abdul, overjoyed, replied: "My dear sheikh, convey my greetings and thanks to the spirits." Two hours later he sent to the worthy wizard a cheque for £T.30,000—£T.1,000 for each of the years of glory prophesied by him. Ebul Huda invested the money in purchasing the baths of Beshiktash and other property in Stamboul.

The same strain of superstition revealed itself in other forms. When Yildiz Kiosk was ransacked, there was found in a corner a picture of Midhat Pasha and his fellow-Liberals of 1876, clad in priestly robes. The picture had been painted by Abdul himself, with a magical intent.

Such was Abdul the man. Abdul the statesman was quite a different person: cool, level-headed, wholly free from weakness. By his diplomacy he managed to keep the Ottoman Empire afloat through tempests which, but for his adroit piloting, would have ended in its utter shipwreck. But, though a wonderfully skilful diplomat, Abdul was a poor statesman in the true sense of the term. He never could see beyond the immediate tempest. He always concentrated all the resources of his subtle mind to the one problem—how to weather the storm of the moment. He does not seem to have ever asked himself the question: "What next?"—a question which, I take it, is the test of all statesmanship worth the name. Perhaps he did not care to ask it; the real egoist's maxim being *après moi le déluge*. In any case, the chief characteristic of Abdul Hamid's political wisdom

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always was a keen eye for the possibilities of the present, never great imagination or prevision of the future. He found means of escape from danger which the ordinary Turk could not have found for himself; but he always acted just as the ordinary Turk would have acted for himself: on the principle "enough for the day the worry thereof."

And, in the end, he failed. His failure, as we saw, roused no feeling, except one of unseemly exultation, in the persons who voice "public opinion" in Turkey. But those persons, in reality, voice only their own opinion—that is, the opinion of the powers that be. I tried to penetrate a little deeper, and I am glad to be able to record that I found among the lower classes of Abdul Hamid's former subjects—both Mohammedans and Christians—a far nobler feeling: a feeling of profound commiseration with one who stood so high and had fallen so low. A Greek hotel waiter at Salonica, whom I asked what he thought about it all, on the evening of Abdul's arrival in that city, shook his head sadly, as he gazed on the bedding hurriedly carted off from the hotel to the ex-Sultan's villa, and moralised in Solon's words: "Call no man happy, sir, until you have seen his end." A Turkish barber next morning expressed his sentiments more concisely in the one word "*Yazik!*" ("The pity of it!").

CHAPTER XVII

THE POLICY OF THE BROOM

THE latest victory of the Committee, like all its previous victories, was hailed as a fresh triumph of the cause of liberty, progress, and enlightenment over the powers of despotism, reaction, and obscurantism. Its pulpits in the Press were loud in their panegyrics, its partisans in the *cafés* were lavish in their praises, its favourites in society were fulsome in their flattery. Constantinople rang with pæans of self-glorification and Salonica gave itself up to a wild carnival of rhetoric. The President of its municipality, when the fall of the old and the accession of the new Sultan were announced, hastened to fire off two telegrams. One was addressed to Mohammed V. It ran: "The thirty-three years, sombre with misfortunes, traversed by the Ottoman people have disappeared. Your Majesty's advent to the throne gives a new life to the noble Ottoman nation. Your Majesty has crowned its august head with a wreath of happiness." The other was addressed to Mahmud Shevket Pasha: "Excellency," it began, "to-day a heavenly voice, rising from the bottom of the heart of the nation and the conscience of the free Ottomans, blesses your glorious name. Commander, you have glorified the

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name of our army and the name of the Osmanli. You have reconquered Liberty, wherefore you have earned the title of Second Conqueror of Constantinople. We are all grateful to you. On this happy and unique day the name of Shevket Pasha soars to the high celestial spheres."

When hide-bound bureaucrats rose to such heights of eloquence, what was left for the professional rhetoricians of the Press? They did their best. "To-day," said one of these dithyrambists, "from all the shores of the Mediterranean rises a chorus of hymns and thanksgivings in honour of Young Turkey, mother of a new era." "The Committee," prophesied another, "will restore to Modern Byzantium its ancient splendour, its dazzling brilliance. In a short time we shall see all the nations hitherto hostile turning like pilgrims towards Stamboul, the altar of light, the centre of Oriental civilisation, united by the grace of the Goddess Liberty." It was all most elevating and inspiring: a veritable whirlwind of words, wonderful, overwhelming, inebriating, like a Bacchic dance. But like a Bacchic dance it had its secret critics—spectators who, like Pentheus of old, remaining perversely sober in the midst of the general intoxication, watched the antics of the worshippers with mingled awe and misgiving. They remembered having assisted at a similar celebration only nine short months before. Then, as now, the journals were full of dithyrambs just as elevated and elevating as these; then, as now, the *cafés* prophesied the advent of an era of peace; then, as now, the sole fountain of all this optimistic frenzy was a beautiful faith in the wisdom and benevolence of the Committee. Dithy-

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rambic displays, it must be confessed, are apt to lose their charm by repetition, and the force of prophecies depends on their fulfilment. It could hardly be said that the faith placed in the Committee had hitherto been justified by its conduct. How, then, could sober spectators be expected to join in the dance? The whole performance seemed to them nothing more than an unreasoning triumph of hope over experience—a fresh manifestation of that incurable weakness of men for believing what they wish to be true—in brief, a mere noisy orgy of popular credulity.

It still remained to be seen how a victory won by sheer military force would be used for the vindication of political freedom. Two of the cardinal items in the Committee's programme were the "discovery and condign punishment of the promoters of the recent revolt" and the "enactment, while martial law is in force, of laws relating to the Press, public meetings, vagrancy, political clubs and associations." In other words, the main concern of the victors was, first, to extirpate their opponents, and secondly, to remove all chances of future opposition by restricting the free expression of public opinion. They proceeded to carry out their intentions with a promptitude and a thoroughness truly military. They began with the extirpation—they called it purification. Mahmud Shevket Pasha issued a proclamation declaring that no pity would be shown to any of the men who had participated in the late troubles either as actors or as instigators. All such persons would be tried by court-martial. The broom was set to work. Many of the late mutineers had already escaped to Asia Minor, and many had been made prisoners during the fight-

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ing. But thousands still lay hidden in the town. Measures for the discovery and arrest of these were taken on a most comprehensive scale. The chase was carried on, even in the European quarters, with all the eagerness of a hunt of men by men. Day after day long processions of suspects might be seen conducted under escort to Galata Serai, the seat of one of the many Examining Commissions specially appointed. When the bag was considered sufficient the prisoners were formed into a column and marched off to the court-martial at the War Office. There were among them marshals and generals, subalterns, and privates of all arms. When their trial was concluded they were divided into three categories : men actually guilty of murder, accomplices, neutrals. The first were hanged, the second were degraded and sentenced to penal servitude or incarceration, the third were dispersed among the regiments of the 2nd and 3rd Army Corps. But there were few belonging to this last category. The gibbets—rough structures consisting of three beams, joined at the top, and a rope—set up in the most conspicuous parts of the capital showed how many belonged to the first ; while the multitude of the second was demonstrated by the fact that nearly ten thousand were shipped off to Macedonia—there to be treated as convicts, stigmatised by a special uniform, and employed in the construction of roads and bridges—and that a torpedo-boat was told off to Thasos to prevent the escape of the prisoners relegated to that island on similar terms. This severity, as might have been foreseen, roused intense indignation among those soldiers whose loyalty to their comrades was stronger



A CAPTURED SPY, DISGUISED AS A *HODJA*.

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than their fear of the Committee, and an attempt was made to give violent expression to the feeling. At midnight on May 1st the garrison of the Arsenal mutinied, demanding that an amnesty should be granted to the authors of the counter-revolution and that they should be allowed to assist at the Sultan's *selamlık*. Otherwise they threatened to train the guns of the warships anchored in the Golden Horn against Pera, and to bombard the European quarters. Fortunately, those guns had been dismantled, and the Committee's forces found small difficulty in subduing these malcontents. They surrounded them with a cordon of artillery extending from Galata to Haskeuy, and compelled them to lay down their arms at once. The episode, however, though quickly over, possessed a significance that was not lost upon sober spectators.

But the soldiers were not the only victims of the avenging broom. The hunt of the *softas* and *hodjas* was pursued with equal energy, and was inspired by an even greater hatred. Domiciliary visits were carried on all over Stamboul, and while the Committee's troops swept the land, the warships were scouring the shores and islands of the Sea of Marmora. After the *softas* and *hodjas* came the turn of the eunuchs who had acted as intermediaries between highly placed personages and the rank and file. For the capture of these a diligent search was made in the palaces of various pashas, and the captives, chained, were taken in large carriages to the War Office. By this means thousands of all sorts of suspects—religious teachers and students, court parasites and spies, civil servants high and low, in-

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cluding ex-Ministers and ex-Councillors of State, journalists, and so forth—were swept off to jail, and while the prisons of Stamboul swarmed with an hourly increasing multitude of inmates, scores of wagonfuls were daily sent off to Salonica. But neither the jails of the capital nor those of the provinces were long encumbered with their guests. The court-martials—two new ones had meanwhile been established in the capital, while others were at work in the provinces—speedily relieved the overcrowded cells of their occupants. Many of the wretches were shot after a summary trial, and many might be seen swinging from the primitive gibbets, clad in long white shirts, each man bearing pinned to his bosom a paper stating his name, rank, and crime. And for every man who thus suffered in broad daylight a dozen were probably drowned in the Bosphorus under cover of darkness: that, at all events, was the firm belief of people born and bred in Turkey, and thoroughly imbued with the methods of Turkish justice. Personally, as I did not happen to witness any of these nocturnal performances or to obtain tangible proof of their occurrence, I record this belief simply as characteristic of the atmosphere created by the triumph of Liberty.

Other touches helpful towards a comprehension of the same atmosphere were supplied in full measure and with a startling frankness by the very panegyrists of the Committee. I made a point of supplementing my own diurnal observations by a diligent perusal of the local newspapers every evening I spent in Constantinople, and my diligence was

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frequently rewarded with such illuminating finds as the following: "One of our readers"—I found this in a journal of May 12th—"has addressed to us the question, 'What is the burial accorded in Moham-medan countries to those who are condemned to death? Are they buried according to the rites of their religion?' We have sought authoritative information on the subject, and this is the result: The executed persons are considered as having died without any religion. Therefore their bodies are neither washed nor buried in consecrated ground, and the funeral ceremony due to every True Believer is not accorded to them. As is seen," commented the editor, "the punishment extends beyond the grave. Let us only add that the bodies of the thirteen hanged on the 3rd instant were carried off in dungcarts which waited for them at the foot of the gibbets, and that the spot where will rest the bodies of the twenty-four hanged to-day will not be marked by any sign, not even a mound of earth. Nothing must indicate to the passer-by that he treads over the body of a human being. They are annihilated, they exist no longer."

Another instructive feature of this reign of vengeance was the relaxation it exhibited of ordinary social ties. As during the proscriptions of ancient Rome, so in these modern copies, one came across instances of families divided against themselves by the fiercest of feuds—political animosity. Here is an example. A certain Loufti Effendi—who held a post in the commissariat of the 3rd Army Corps at Monastir—on hearing that his nephew, a theological student, had taken part in the counter-revolution, joined the ranks as a volunteer with the object of coming to Constan-

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tinople and punishing him. Arrived in the capital, he set out at once with four of his Monastir comrades in search of the culprit. They found him, and then a curious interview ensued. The uncle began by informing the young man, with many expressions of abuse, that he had come purposely to punish him. The nephew tried to hide his terror by treating the matter as a joke. Thereupon Loufti's comrades seized him and took him off to the War Office, where he was sentenced to death. Loufti himself volunteered to announce the sentence to the young man.

The *Yeni Assir*, in relating the story, commented that a nation which counts such noble men among its children need fear nothing. The Romans had similarly praised Brutus for sentencing his own sons to death on an identical occasion. Certainly in both cases the motive was patriotism, and patriotism, like any other kind of fanaticism, is a virtue that soars above ordinary morality. The preachers of the persecution of heretics in Spain used to urge upon their congregations the sacred duty of delivering into the clutches of the Inquisition even their nearest and dearest ; for loyalty to the Faith cancelled all other bonds, the claims of divinity were higher than the laws of humanity, and the most heinous crimes against man ceased to be crimes if they were committed in the name of God. I suppose there are sound and sufficing arguments that might be adduced in defence of this interesting ethical code, though I must confess that, for my part, I am unable to conceive what they can be. It is, no doubt, the motive that counts and not the deed—the motive and the Cause. But then one has to be so sure of one's motives—and so sure of one's Cause ! And for

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the acquisition of such certainty I find one life-time not enough. That Turkish Brutus, like his Roman prototype and the Spanish Inquisitors, was apparently more fortunate. Either he had reached certainty, or, more probably, he never thought about it. Happy Loufti! thine is the stuff that heroes are made on.

A brief holiday was allowed to the gibbets while the ceremonies of the new Sultan's installation were in progress; but, as soon as the festivities were over, the lethal engines resumed their mournful occupation. A fresh impetus to their activity was presently given by the ransack of Yildiz Kiosk, which was treated by the Young Turks in precisely the same way as the Tuileries had been treated by the French revolutionaries. After the flight of Abdul Hamid's principal wives and their suites and the arrest of his courtiers, there still remained in the palace some two hundred odalisques. These, having been made to supply all the information they could as to the whereabouts of hidden treasure, were given notice to quit. Some of them had saved out of the wreck enough to live in luxury for the rest of their days, and so they were left to take care of themselves. The others were to be sent back to their parents or to be distributed among various wealthy households until they should find husbands. Sixty carriages conveyed these ladies away from Yildiz, and then the palace was subjected to a minute and systematic spoliation. Every nook and corner of the buildings from attic to cellar and every inch of the gardens was thoroughly searched by a special commission which acted under the direction of the Military Dictator, the Chamber being only allowed to send three representatives to witness the operations. The exploration yielded abundant harvest.

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In the Sultan's private apartments were found many safes full of gold and silver coins, securities and title-deeds, as well as many drawers, cupboards, and even portmanteaus, crammed with jewels and loose precious stones of all kinds. In one travelling bag alone the commission reported the discovery of bank-notes amounting to £T.136,000, while in the carpenter's workshop it came upon two boxes containing £T.300,000, also in notes. But even more sensational than this mass of wealth was the discovery of an enormous quantity of private correspondence and secret reports (*djournals*), which furnished the authorities with fresh additions to their lists of proscribed persons and led to new arrests, sentences, executions; while the documents that were not immediately used to feed the gibbets were carefully preserved in order to serve in the future as weapons against incriminated dignitaries who might dare to oppose the powers that be.

The purification daily assumed larger proportions. The court-martial spared no rank and respected no person. Yet at the beginning prudence dictated a certain discrimination. During the first few weeks the avengers, while falling foul of the rank and file of the Mohammedan clergy, shrank from laying hands on the great *ulemas*. The Union of the latter was extolled in the Press for the patriotic services it had rendered in curbing the fanaticism of the mob and the mutineers. "These services will be eternally alive in the memory of all Ottomans. All men owe a profound debt of gratitude to the *ulemas* for their truly patriotic energy," declared the inspired organs. But as soon as the Committee began to feel stronger by the extermination of the crowd, it procured the con-

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demnation of the Chief of the League of Mohammed to death and the sentence of other prominent members of the association to penal servitude for life.

Thus the broom continued its bloody work day after day, week after week, and month after month throughout the summer without respite or remorse. It looked as if one of the earliest predictions made by the sceptics had been faithfully fulfilled. The Turkish Revolution had followed the course of the French Revolution. The period of generous sentiments was succeeded by a period of unrestrained and unscrupulous vindictiveness. The guillotine had found a rival in the rudimentary gibbet, and Napoleon Bonaparte a sort of disciple in Mahmud Shevket Pasha.

While the first and most urgent part of the Dictator's programme was carried out in this heroic fashion, the second was not neglected. The Committee's oracles in the Press had been inspired betimes to lament the excess of liberty they had hitherto enjoyed. "Until now," wrote one of them when the avengers were on the point of entering the capital, "the Government, actuated by an exaggerated respect for liberty, has allowed everything to be said and done. But, alas! wicked citizens have abused their freedom in order to play us an evil trick. Let us hope that the rude lesson we have just received will serve as a corrective in the future." Other writers moralised mournfully on the perilous shortness of the step that leads from absolutism to licence, but failed to draw attention to the shortness, no less perilous, of the step that leads from the repression of licence to the re-establishment of absolutism. The ground was thus prepared, and, as soon as the army occupied Constan-

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tinople, it began its campaign against the Press. Many newspapers had already been silenced by the execution, incarceration, or flight of their editors. Those that had survived the court-martial were rendered harmless by other means. One day you heard that the *Osmanlı* had been suspended at the request of the Minister of the Interior, because it had published a statement that an officer had taken part in an act of pillage. Next day the *Volkan* was prosecuted by the Ministry of Justice, at the request of the Grand Vizier, because it had published an open letter addressed to the Sultan. The circulation of unofficial supplements was forbidden, and the agents of the police might be seen arresting newsboys in the streets, confiscating their papers, and burning them publicly—all proceedings reminiscent of a similar persecution of the Press instituted on the accession of Abdul Hamid. The parallel was brought home with peculiar vividness by the circumstance that in both periods the persecution extended even to the comic journals. In 1876, on the day on which Abdul had ascended the throne, the comic paper *Koukourikos* had been suppressed by a Government order. Similarly in 1909, soon after the accession of Mohammed V., several comic papers were indefinitely suspended, at the very moment when the capital was decorating itself to celebrate the triumph of Liberty. Well might a sardonic critic comment: "Thirty-three years have passed, but nothing has changed. The Press Bureau, omnipotent under Abdul, remains omnipotent under Mohammed V. And yet we have had two revolutions in the meantime!" But there was some difference between the two reigns. Under Abdul it was forbidden to laugh at anything or

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anybody, the Sultan's enemies included. Under Mohammed V. it was forbidden to laugh at anything or anybody, except at the things and persons that the Government wished to see ridiculed. While the faintest sneer at the powers that be was severely punished, no one was molested for the most ferocious attacks on the powers that were. Caricatures of the fallen monarch apart, the newsboys were allowed to shout themselves hoarse in hawking various publications, in various languages, bearing such titles as "The Crimes of Hamid!" "Hamid's Life-story!" "The Mysteries of Yildiz!" "The Tragedies of Stamboul!" and so forth.

But spasmodic interference by the police and the gibbet was not enough. For one undesirable editor suspended to-day, several might appear to-morrow, if no adequate provision were made to prevent them. The Constitution afforded an opening for such precautions. Its 12th Article enigmatically stated that "the Press is free within the limits prescribed by law." When the Chamber, in revising the Constitution, reached that article, it stumbled violently against its vagueness. No wonder. What an older assembly would have done would probably have been to begin by asking the simple question "What law?" The Ottoman Parliament preferred to begin at the other end. The upshot was a long debate on the abstract thesis regarding the part played by the Press in the general development of mankind. Some of the deputies dwelt on the beneficial influence of the Press upon the progress of human ideas and culture. Others dwelt on its pernicious influence upon minds devoid of ideas and culture. When this academic

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discussion had gone far enough, some one thought to point his parable by a reference to the merits or demerits of the old Turkish censorship as it existed under Abdul Hamid. This brought the House down from the clouds to solid earth. One member traced to that censorship the decay of the Empire. Another remarked that exceptional cases needed exceptional treatment, and pleaded for the revival of the censorship: the country was under martial law, and martial law does not recognise liberty of speech. A third retorted that it was so; but was it desirable to introduce into the Constitution a provision which could only be justified at a time when the Constitution itself was suffering from suspended animation? If so, why stop at the Press? Why not introduce into it all the other restrictions of personal freedom that the court-martial had the right and duty to impose? And if that were done, where would the Constitution be? Here was as pretty a dilemma as ever a legislative assembly found itself called upon to play with. But the Ottoman Parliament was no longer permitted even to play at legislation.

At that stage the Dictator stepped in, after the fashion of a *deus ex machina*, though not in his proper person, and brushed aside the *reductio ad absurdum* by bringing in his Bill. The House seemed delighted at finding itself thus rescued from its uncomfortable position between the horns of the dilemma. All difference of opinion miraculously disappeared. A kind of debate did take place, but its only object seemed to be to keep up the decencies of parliamentary independence. I was present at the one sitting when this important matter was settled, and

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if anything impressed me more deeply than the docility of the House, it was the puerility of the Bill. It dictated that a newspaper editor should be a graduate of one of the State High Schools, that before he could obtain permission to start his newspaper he should wade through an ocean of formalities, and that, when the paper was started, the Government should have the power to stop it whenever it thought fit, without waiting for the decision of the tribunals. Among the offences for which a paper was liable to prosecution were inaccuracies of statement, attacks on Government functionaries and members of Parliament, and criticism of the army. So far concerning local journals. As regards foreign prints, the Government was given full powers to interdict their importation into the Sultan's dominions, as in the days of yore. Speaking as a selfish journalist, I cannot refrain from breathing here a parenthetical prayer that the interdiction may in future be guided by the same degree of intelligence as it was in the past. I remember once making inquiries at the Press Bureau as to which English newspapers were allowed to enter the Sultan's dominions and which were excommunicated. The official solemnly informed me that the *Daily Chronicle*, being a Conservative journal and well disposed towards Abdul Hamid, was welcomed ; but wild, revolutionary organs were strictly forbidden. Among the latter he mentioned *The Times* newspaper.

The main argument advanced by the authors of the Bill in its defence was the part which certain newspapers had played in fomenting the recent reaction. Only one speaker ventured to suggest that the importance of the part on which so much stress was laid

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could easily be exaggerated, and to point out to his colleagues how foolish it was, in deciding the future of the Press, to let their judgment be biassed by a set of circumstances not likely to recur. His voice was the voice of one preaching in the wilderness. Of the lay members many dreaded reaction too sincerely, and others dreaded as sincerely the danger of being suspected guilty of reactionary leanings; while the clerical members had no sympathy whatever with freedom of speech. Besides, all the deputies seemed conscious of the fact that their business was to pass the Bill, and not to question its wisdom. Indeed, how could any serious opposition be offered to a measure framed under martial law and backed by the commander of a victorious army?

With the same speed were passed the other items of the Dictator's programme—the measures relating to public meetings, political clubs and associations, strikes, vagrancy—and the resolutions of the House were immediately transmitted by him to the police. The police hastened to translate those resolutions into regulations, and its agents lost as little time in carrying them out. Lists of the foreign and provincial visitors in the capital were drawn up, and every one had to give an account of himself. Those who could not show any visible means of subsistence were to be sent back to their respective homes, while the residents of Constantinople similarly situated were to be treated as vagabonds.

Now, it cannot be denied that some of these measures were admirable in intention. Like the establishment of martial law, they were, no doubt, justified by the necessity of suppressing the dangerous

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elements that had come to the surface during the troubles. As regards the strikes, for example, a portion of public opinion had always looked upon them as a grave menace to the tranquillity of the Empire in its state of transition, and as tending to frighten from the country the foreign capital of which it stands in such great need. The Vagrancy Act, again, was favourably regarded as a measure calculated to diminish the too close resemblance, after dark, between the Grand' Rue de Pera and Piccadilly. But, after all due allowances are made, the arbitrary power over private individuals conferred permanently on the police was; to say the least, too faithful an imitation of the old methods of government. Likewise, the imposition of permanent restrictions on the liberty of the Press, and on the right of public meetings and associations, under military pressure, was certainly too suggestive of a perpetual dictatorship. These proceedings could only be defended by overwhelming proofs of their necessity, and such proofs were not produced. Besides, while avowedly aimed at the reactionaries, they were really calculated to hit the Liberals; for the bulk of the reactionaries, being illiterate, were the least liable to be influenced by the Press. In other words, the victory of the Committee, while dealing a mortal blow at despotism, had at the same time dealt a severe blow at Constitutionalism. Although the army had not openly seized power for itself, except in so far as the temporary rule by court-martial went, yet it was virtually master of the situation. It was impossible to disguise the fact that the Committee relied upon the army for the maintenance of its own parliamentary supremacy. Now parlia-

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mentary supremacy that rests upon military support may conceivably be a good thing; it certainly is not a constitutional thing. Bills rushed through the House at the point of the bayonet, however beneficial they may be, can hardly be described as expressions of the nation's free will. But that the expression of the nation's free will was not one of the things which the victors included under the name of Constitutionalism had been made abundantly clear by their essays in legislation. In what degree the theoretical deficiencies of that legislation will be compensated for by practical utility the future only can show. Meanwhile it is plain that the Committee, in making those essays, was impelled by political, at least as much as by administrative motives. And the wisdom of its policy may fairly be questioned when its whole tendency is considered. For this purpose it is necessary to revert to the policy of the broom.

The Young Turks, in their eagerness to gratify their thirst for vengeance, under the guise of zeal for justice and the interests of liberty, had struck blindly at all opponents. They carried on the process of purification, forgetting that purgatives, if too drastic and too indiscriminately administered, have often led to disaster. Their severity, though it may have had a tranquillising effect for the moment, is bound to leave behind it a heritage of hatred, pregnant with perils for the future. In order to estimate the magnitude of those perils, it is sufficient to glance at the nature of the enemies which had been arrayed against the Committee. The most obvious of those enemies was the fanaticism of the Mohammedan masses—an enemy whose importance is not to be measured by

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the apparent facility with which it was defeated. Although the calamity of a civil war on a large scale was averted, it was averted by the adroitness with which the Young Turks had drawn up their plans and by the promptness and precision with which they carried them out, not by any overwhelming force. Their success was due to their skill rather than to their inherent strength, and the best informed of the Young Turks themselves, as I have already shown, were the least disposed to look upon victory as a foregone conclusion. Their co-religionists were divided into two great camps. While Monastir in Europe acclaimed the Constitution and proclaimed Mohammed V., Brussa in Asia acclaimed the Sheriat and declared itself loyal to Abdul Hamid, even at the moment when the 4th Army Corps in its neighbourhood pronounced in favour of the Committee. This divergence of sentiment between the Anatolian troops and the Anatolian people was easy to account for. The former were for the moment under the control of Young Turk officers, the latter were under the influence of Old Turk clerics. In the eyes of the Anatolian masses the Young Turks were miscreants, traitors to Islam and the Sacred Law—men whose ascendancy was more hateful, not only than the yoke of the Caliph, but even than the domination of the Christian Powers. Hence the attempt made to provoke European intervention by the massacre of the wretched Armenians in Cilicia. Among the troops themselves this sentiment was only checked by the efforts of their officers—a check the precarious character of which had been demonstrated in Constantinople when the least provocation had sufficed to turn

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the men—even the Salonica regiments—against their leaders. Other incidents were eloquent of the same weakness of the hold the Young Turks had on their followers, and of their own consciousness of that weakness. It was that consciousness which dictated the extraordinary precautions taken to prevent the infiltration of religious emissaries into the ranks of the besieging army, and it was the same consciousness that compelled many officers, even when they had become masters of the capital, to manage with their own hands some of the batteries—especially the one which was destined, in certain contingencies, to bombard the Caliph's residence. For the rest, how little the rank and file on either side knew what they were fighting for was shown by the ingenious stratagem which contributed to the capture of one of the resisting barracks. While the fusillade went on, a Young Turk officer ordered a bugler to sound the "Cease fire!" Both sides, being accustomed to the same signal, instinctively obeyed, and the result was a parley which ended in the surrender of the barracks.

The one genuine impulse which animated the Turkish soldiers, like the rest of the Turkish masses, was the religious feeling, and it would have gone ill with the Committee had that feeling among their own followers been worked upon by their opponents. During those few days it was an open question whether the end would be a triumph for Liberalism, or a triumph for despotism, or a fierce civil war between province and province, class and class. Never before had Turkey been so near to the brink of an abyss. What turned the scale in favour of the

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Young Turks was their own superior organisation and the utter disorganisation of their enemies.

It would, however, be absurd to suppose that the fanaticism of the Mohammedan masses vanished with their active opposition. Feelings do not die in a day, and, if they did, the policy of the broom adopted by the Committee was nicely calculated to keep this particular feeling alive. The struggle was in itself sufficient to widen the hostility between the prophets of the new and the priests of the old, and more particularly between the populations of the European and those of the Asiatic provinces. That hostility would in any case have remained as a potential cause of future trouble. But as if that were not enough, the Committee has done its best to perpetuate and to intensify it. As has been seen, numbers of the authors—lay and clerical—of the counter-revolution were forced by the fear of the gibbet to flee to Asia Minor, and there they are certain to find even a more favourable field for the dissemination of their ideas than they had found in Stamboul. These men, smarting under the memory of their defeat and the danger they narrowly escaped, infuriated, too, by the ruthless treatment of the comrades who had not been fortunate enough to escape, may be depended on to watch, work, and wait for the chance of revenge. It would surely have been a wiser policy to have kept these men by lenience in a city where they can be supervised, and if need be suppressed, than to have forced them to seek refuge in districts which by their distance from the capital and the quality of their inhabitants supply a safe centre for the propagation of discontent. To a similar criticism lies open the

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policy adopted by the Committee towards the mutineers. As already stated, no fewer than 10,000 of them have been sent to Macedonia alone, where they are treated as convicts. How long will these exasperated soldiers submit tamely to their humiliation? It is true that many of them, when captured, expressed a tearful contrition for their past misdeeds and endeavoured to exonerate themselves by blaming those who had deceived them. But, however sincere the repentance may have been, it is scarcely likely to outlast the long punishment to which the penitents were subjected. The very troops set to guard them may sooner or later be infected by their discontent; for, after all, they are both Turkish peasants, bound together by the same sentiments of creed and class. The Young Turks in adopting this policy towards their enemies appear to have strangely forgotten their own experience. It was the similar policy adopted towards themselves by Abdul Hamid that had helped the spread of their own propaganda. The hundreds of exiles in Asia Minor had provided their party with as many zealous agents. Every victim of despotism banished to the provinces was converted by the Sultan's own shortsighted action into a missionary of Liberalism. The terms might easily be reversed. Lastly, the humiliation inflicted upon the ex-Sultan may be expected to contribute its share to Mohammedan discontent. Abdul was, no doubt, a bad monarch; but he was not much worse, he was only much abler, than many of his predecessors. Besides, the abuses of his rule were hardly felt by the masses, familiarised as they had been for centuries to all the evils of absolutism. To them Abdul

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was the Caliph, the Shadow of God on earth, and his enemies the enemies of the Faith. For my part, I do not wish to usurp the mantle of a Jeremiah. Yet, when I take all these things into account, I feel the reverse of sanguine. Frankly, it would not surprise me if the square of St. Sophia, which has within the last twelvemonth resounded with so many cries for "Freedom," should one of these days resound again with the old familiar war-cry of "Faith!"

CHAPTER XVIII

DISCORD

It would be idle to pretend that the outbreak of April 13th was wholly reactionary in its origin. Nothing is more certain than that it was due as much to the hostility entertained towards the Committee by the Liberals as to the hatred nourished towards the Young Turks by the Old Turks.

It was reasonable then to hope that the lesson would not be lost upon the leaders of the Young Turk cause, that they would try to avoid the errors which had turned their natural allies into enemies, and that they would understand at last the value of compromise. Unfortunately this hope was not fulfilled. The victors insisted on treating every opponent as a reactionary. The venerable Kiamil Pasha, despite all friendly interventions on his behalf, was subjected to the indignities of a vulgar conspirator. Prince Sabbaheddin, President of the Liberal Union, was arrested, and was accompanied to prison by his mother and wife. Ismail Kemal Bay, the most active member of the Liberal Union, was stigmatised as a traitor. From his place of refuge in Athens he, together with another Albanian deputy, addressed to the Chamber a message protesting that he had never plotted against the Con-

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stitution, that he had fled only because he had reasons to believe that his life was in danger, and that he was prepared to prove his innocence before any regular tribunal. The Committee took no notice of this apologia. It hoped to find among the papers of Yildiz some evidence of Ismail Kemal's guilt, and so, though unable to seize his person, it might ruin his reputation. This expectation proved vain. Nothing of an incriminating character was found in the palace, probably because there was nothing to be found. Yet the avengers persisted in their persecution of the Albanian rival. Ismail Kemal, nothing daunted, continued to express his opinion of the Committee with the same freedom with which he had defied its wrath on that famous February day in the House. In his letters to his friends he did not hesitate to describe the members of the court-martial as executioners. Some of these letters fell into the hands of the Young Turks and did not tend to conciliate them. In July Mahmud Shevket Pasha made a formal demand in the Chamber for Ismail Kemal's surrender to the military tribunals. The Chamber faced the situation with rare courage. A long discussion ensued, in the course of which there were found many Albanian, Arab, and Greek deputies ready to defend their absent colleague warmly and successfully. The Dictator's demand was rejected by a large majority, and the result of the vote was received with cheers of joy, which clearly showed that there are limits even to the Ottoman Parliament's docility. The scene also showed that the breach between the Young Turks and the other nationalities is as wide as ever. For this the Young Turks themselves are largely to blame.

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In dealing with the nationalities also the Committee evinced a lamentable incapacity for profiting by experience. The alienation of the non-Turkish elements, which, originally due to the tactics adopted by the Committee during the elections, was gradually deepened by its subsequent attitude towards the questions of language, education, and jurisdiction, had contributed, as we saw, its share to the April outbreak. Common sense might have told the Young Turks that it was time to modify their nationalist programme. Their victory offered a splendid opportunity for redressing the mistakes of the past without loss of dignity. They could easily have regained the confidence of the various populations at a moment when they were all once more united by a common feeling of relief at their common escape from the reactionary peril. All that was needed was a more sympathetic consideration of their legitimate aspirations and a more sincere application of the Constitution in a spirit of equality. The Young Turks neglected to take advantage of the psychological moment. Their treatment of Ismail Kemal and other Albanian opponents had the reverse of a soothing effect upon a race so deeply imbued with the clannish sentiment. To what extent these victims of the Committee have directly assisted in the continuation of unrest in South Albania, and to what extent the parallel unrest in North Albania is fomented from outside, it is impossible to decide. What is certain is that the whole of the country remains bitterly hostile to the Young Turks. During last summer there raged in the northern districts a rebellion the dimensions of which can be judged from the fact that an army over forty thousand strong had to be employed in order

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to quell it. The Ottoman troops, despite their numbers, met with a most determined resistance. Several battles were fought, and all the efforts of the Turkish General have so far resulted only in the restoration of a peace that no one acquainted with the Skipetar nature can regard as anything more than a temporary truce. The clans have been asked to hand to the Imperial authorities all the guns in their possession, to pay the taxes for the last three years, to demolish many of their fortified towers. In what measure are these demands likely to be complied with by people who have always chosen to sacrifice their lives rather than surrender their purses, who have from time immemorial regarded a fortified tower as an indispensable condition of existence, and who consider the want of a gun as the height of indecency? The answer to these questions is to be found in the reports from Albania. It is stated that the tribal agitation is part of a large conspiracy directed from Avlona, Ismail Kemal's birthplace. It is added that a few months ago Prince Ghika, one of the Pretenders to the Albanian throne of the future, landed near Dulcigno, that he was there solemnly received by both Christian and Mohammedan notables, that he was afterwards conducted to a village where many Albanian chieftains of every creed and no creed took an oath to resist disarmament by the Young Turks on a banner brought by the Prince, and that among the assembled warriors were delegates sent by Ismail Kemal. It is safe to predict that the Young Turks have not heard the last of the Albanian deputy and his fiery compatriots.

Arabia continues in the same turbulent state as

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Albania, and its turbulence arises from similar causes—the secular conditions of the country which I have described in a former chapter, accentuated by the uncompromising attitude of the Young Turks towards the claims of the Arabian nationality. Not long ago the Chamber at Constantinople witnessed a recrudescence of Turco-Arabian friction, brought about by the election of a Turk as deputy for the Arab province of Fezzan. Fifteen Arab members left the Chamber as a protest against this fresh encroachment on their rights. At the moment when these lines are penned despatches from Constantinople state that the Arab Mahdi Idress is marching with a numerous following towards the Menaheh district, and that the name of Abdul Hamid is still mentioned in prayers in the mosques of the Yemen as that of the legitimate Sultan.

Towards the Christian nationalities the Young Turks continue to maintain the same inflexibility as towards their co-religionists. Directly after their victory there appeared certain signs which encouraged the expectation that the errors of the past would not be repeated. The new Minister of the Interior paid a visit to the Greek Patriarch and impressed him by the cordiality of his tone. The principal topic of discussion in that interview was the competence of the Turkish tribunals to pass judgment on the conduct of Greek bishops. A wide divergence of opinion had long existed on this subject between the Porte and the Patriarchate, and lately the difference had assumed an acute form, owing to the attempts made by the Government to bring the Greek clergy within the jurisdiction of the civil courts—attempts which the Patriarch regarded as an infringement of the privileges

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which the Church had enjoyed ever since the conquest. The Minister's visit did not, indeed, remove the difference, but it was interpreted as a step towards reconciliation. It was long since a Minister had paid such a mark of respect to the head of a Christian community. Soon afterwards Mahmud Shevket Pasha paid to his Holiness a similar compliment and discussed with him the question of military service.

From the Greek Patriarchate the Dictator proceeded to the Armenian, where the subject of conversation was the massacre of the Armenians in Asia Minor. The Armenian Patriarchate had besought the Dictator to establish military courts in all the districts of Anatolia where the lives of the Christians were in danger. Mahmud Shevket Pasha gave personal assurances that the request would be granted without delay. These visits to the heads of the Greek and Armenian nations seemed to indicate a new orientation of the domestic policy of the Young Turks. Unfortunately the change did not last long.

The Armenians did not find the conduct of the Ottoman military authorities in harmony with their professions. The Young Turks had not moved a finger in defence of the slaughtered Armenians. They had preferred to use their forces for the annihilation of their political opponents rather than for the protection of their Christian fellow-countrymen. While they had been celebrating the victory of Equality and Fraternity in Constantinople, thousands of Armenians had fallen victims to the fury of the Mohammedan fanatics in Cilicia. One of the foreign consuls at Aleppo, having travelled through the regions which had witnessed the slaughter, collected

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evidence that showed the fearful extent of the losses and sufferings inflicted upon the miserable population. At Osmanieh 350 men and women were done to death, in Hamidieh 500, in the fields around Hamidieh 1,500. In Antioch scarcely a man had escaped. It had all happened at the time of year when labourers come from the mountain villages down to the plains for the harvest. Thousands of these were shot like rabbits where they were working, and their bodies, as the traveller rode across the country in June, still lay where they had fallen. "Perhaps," said the Armenians, "the Young Turks had not at the time the means of preventing the butchery of our brethren. Why do they not now, when they are undisputed masters of the situation, punish the butchers? They have made a liberal use of the gibbet for the extermination of men guilty of attacks on themselves: why do they spare the men who have been guilty of infinitely more savage outrages on ourselves? Is this what they mean by equality and fraternity?" These charges of partiality were not devoid of foundation. Although martial courts had been established in Asia Minor, it was noted that a long time passed before any arrests were made; and when such arrests were made, the Armenians noted with dismay, and foreign observers with astonishment, that there were more Christian prisoners than Mohammedans. In the sentences meted out, also, the same curious proportion was observed as between victims and criminals. For example, the court-martial at Adana, towards the end of June, condemned four Armenians to ten years' and four to five years' hard labour, while it condemned only two Mohammedans to five years' and one to one year's

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hard labour. And that, too, while Turkish official statistics clearly demonstrated on which side the balance of criminality leaned : out of 4,823 houses burnt down at Adana only 386 belonged to Mohammedans.

The procedure of the military courts was inspired by a conception of equity that failed to earn the gratitude of the Armenians or the approval of any one else. Instead, both among the non-Turkish elements and in Turkish Liberal circles it aroused a storm of indignation which at last forced the Young Turks to adopt measures more consonant with the ordinary interpretation of the phrase "even-handed justice." The governors of two districts who had made themselves notorious as instigators of the massacres were arrested and sent under a strong escort to Adana. A score of Mohammedan notables of the same city were also sought out and committed for trial. These measures seem to have been due to pressure brought to bear by a Parliamentary Commission which, not trusting the military authorities, had insisted on carrying on independent investigations on the spot. Thanks to their presence and energy the court-martial had to change its president, and was finally compelled to publish a report that could not be criticised for lack of candour. It frankly stated that fifteen persons were already hanged, that eight hundred deserved death, that fifteen thousand deserved hard labour for life, and that eighty thousand deserved minor sentences. The multitude of the miscreants obviously rendered a literal application of the requirements of strict justice a perilous undertaking, and the military judges, while declaring that, if it

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were decided to proceed with the punishment, they were ready to draw a cordon round the town and "deal expeditiously with the matter," could not be blamed for recommending a general amnesty as more likely to conduce to ultimate reconciliation.

It is a pity that the military judges took three months in arriving at this praiseworthy conclusion. Their action was intended to revive confidence, its tardiness was calculated to encourage scepticism among the Armenians. The latter, indeed, maintained that, besides being tardy, that action was inadequate, for, while dwelling on the multitude of Mohammedan sinners, the report of the court-martial endeavoured to minimise the sin by accusing the victims of having provoked the outbreak. This accusation was strongly resented by the Armenians, and their Patriarch threatened to resign unless the Government publicly contradicted it. All that the Government, stirred at last to a sense of the dangerous situation which their former disregard of Armenian susceptibilities had created, could do was to order the Sheikh-ul-Islam to prepare a circular showing by quotations from the Koran and references to the Sacred Law that it is the duty of all True Believers to look upon Christians as equals, entitled to the same treatment as Moslems. This proclamation was to be distributed broadcast in every Mohammedan congregation over the Empire, by the muftis, cadis, and *hodjas* of various towns and villages. Further, the most enlightened of the *ulemas* were instructed to take the equality of the Christians as their text in the sermons which they were to preach during the month of Ramazan—the time of year when

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the Mohammedan mind is peculiarly susceptible to religious influence for good or evil. The publication of this manifesto, no doubt, proved that the Young Turks' reluctance to deal severely with the authors of the Cilician atrocities arose in part from the fear of irritating still further the fanatical masses against themselves. But it also proved that they had the means of averting that danger without neglecting their duty. Their own safety did not absolutely require the sacrifice of the Armenians. Given a reasonable measure of goodwill, it was possible to reconcile expediency with justice.

As regards the Greeks also, the initial manifestations of cordiality were speedily effaced by a revival of distrust. The Greeks complain that the latest victory of the Committee, instead of establishing the Constitution, has established a constitutional absolutism more systematic, more efficient, and therefore more pernicious than the old despotism. Instead of one, the country now has a whole host of autocrats. Constitutional equality, they say, is interpreted by the Young Turks as meaning the complete denial of every other nationality in the Empire. Things were bad enough before April; they have grown infinitely worse since that date. The legal restrictions imposed upon the expression of public opinion have deprived them of the power of defending their cause in the Press or of airing their grievances in public meetings. And while the Greek journals are gagged, the Turkish journals are allowed to inveigh freely against the Greeks, and to fan the ill-feeling of the Mohammedan masses towards them.

Mahmud Shevket Pasha himself, who in May paid

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the Greek Patriarch the compliment of a visit, in June received that prelate in a manner that compelled the venerable visitor to leave the Dictator's presence abruptly. There are many versions current of this sensational interview. But the facts seem to be that the Pasha told the Patriarch that he considered the Greeks alone responsible for certain disorders that had occurred in Asia Minor and Macedonia, and that he gave expression to that opinion with a bluntness which contrasted strangely with the conciliatory tone he had hitherto maintained. Indeed, if the account given by the Patriarch himself is literally accurate, "brutality" would describe the Dictator's new manner better than "bluntness." The Pasha is reported to have ended his harangue with the threat, "We shall smash the heads of the Greeks!" The Patriarch immediately rose to his feet and, saying "I have no time to listen to such language. I thank you in the name of the Greek nation," left the Pasha to meditate on the uses of speech. The upshot of his meditations was a denial through the Turkish Press that he had used the words attributed to him—a denial that seemed to answer admirably the definition of a *dementi* as an official contradiction of the truth.

The estrangement has been accentuated by the unpopularity which the Greeks have incurred in the eyes of the Young Turks owing to the reopening of the Cretan question, and by the apprehensions with which the recent massacres of the Armenians have filled the Greeks, in common with the rest of the Christians. The natural sympathy which the Greeks of Turkey evince with the aspirations of their Cretan brethren has aroused a savage resentment in the more

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chauvinist circles of the Young Turk party, whose organs, like the *Tanin*, have not only caused an extensive boycott of Greek industry, but have openly threatened their Greek fellow-countrymen with sanguinary retaliation should the Cretan crisis lead to the molestation of the Mohammedan inhabitants of the island. The shameful slaughter of the Armenians afforded painful evidence of the facility with which such threats can be translated into deeds. The Greeks, however, are not Armenians. Passive submission to brute force has never been one of their virtues. They therefore began to prepare for self-defence in case any attack should be made on them by the Mohammedan mob. Their preparations apparently consisted in the secret importation of arms, and the result has been an increase of mutual animosity. The incident between Mahmud Shevket Pasha and the Œcumenical Patriarch illustrates the strained relations between the two elements. Other illustrations of the tension are reported in daily-growing quantities from every quarter. In the district of Aivali, in Asia Minor, and in some of the islands, arrests of Greeks were lately carried out on a vast scale, and the persons arrested were described as being beaten until the blood flowed. Domiciliary visits for the purpose of discovering arms and ammunition were conducted by the police in the most barbarous fashion. Churches were ransacked, and even tombs broken open, the dead being disinterred in the hunt for hidden weapons. Even Hellenic subjects were arbitrarily arrested or were forced to pay taxes from which foreign residents in the Ottoman Empire are exempt, the military authorities maintaining that the Constitution has

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abolished the Capitulations, and refusing to allow the Hellenic consul to give legal assistance either in the case of the domiciliary visits or in the trials of his co-nationals.

Among other proofs of the widening breach between the non-Turkish elements and the Young Turks may be mentioned the prohibition of the formation of clubs and associations on a racial basis passed by the Senate in the middle of last August. This enactment has aroused bitter hostility among Greeks, Bulgars, Armenians, and Albanians alike. Meetings have been held in many parts of the country to protest against a measure which is inspired by the wish to suppress the national life of the various races, but which, as a matter of fact, is eminently calculated to intensify their animosities by driving them to secrecy. Even more eloquent of this lamentable division is a recent debate in the Chamber, when the question of the status of the non-Mohammedan communities was discussed. The Mohammedan majority declared for the abolition of their privileges, and this attitude provoked a storm of indignation in which Greeks, Armenians, Bulgars, Serbs, and Jews found themselves for once united.

But the principal theatre of inter-racial strife still lies, as might have been expected, in Macedonia.

CHAPTER XIX

THE MACEDONIAN NIGHTMARE

THE Young Turks, as we saw, had from the first made common cause with the Bulgarian Internal Organisation under the brigand chief Sandansky. The alliance naturally gave umbrage to the Greeks, who soon began to suffer from its effects. In many districts disputes between the Patriarchists and the Exarchists about the ownership of the churches and schools were decided by the Turkish authorities in favour of the latter. In every question that arose Turkish officials and Bulgarian revolutionaries were found united against the Greek. The tribunals afforded no redress, for the administration of justice, as every other branch of the civil service, under the Constitution differs in no way from what it was in the worst days of despotism. This is due to the fact that the old *personnel*, with the exception of individuals who have made themselves obnoxious to the powers that be, is still retained for want of money and men: the purification has been limited to the expurgation of political opponents. But, as if to add new terrors to the old reign of injustice, the Young Turks have not hesitated to place the very tribunals under the sway of their Bulgarian allies. Thus the notorious

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brigand chief Tchernopeff has recently been appointed a judge in the court at Strumnitza—one of the most lively centres of the Greco-Bulgarian feud. In Salonica itself, the capital of Macedonia, Sandansky may be seen strutting about the streets, surrounded by a retinue of anarchists, the petted friend of the authorities, which even subsidise a journal published under his auspices. In the circumstances, it is hardly to be wondered at that the Greek population in Macedonia complains of oppression.

The Government, it must be admitted, fully realised the gravity of the peril arising from the just indignation of the Greeks, and did what in them lay to remove some of their grievances. A Bill was brought into the Chamber, in July, proposing that the churches and schools which are the objects of contention in Macedonia should belong to the party which possesses the legal deeds of ownership. The result of the proposal, if it were carried out, would be that nine-tenths of the disputed buildings would remain in the hands of the Patriarchists—that is, of the Greek Established Church which had built them. This was a decision that did not, naturally, commend itself to the Bulgarian Dissenters. The latter wished that the allocation should be decided by an appeal to the villagers, confident that the means of terrorism at their disposal and the partiality of the Young Turks would not fail to turn the plebiscite in their favour. Hence a great outcry on the part of the Bulgars, the Press of Sofia threatening that if the Bill were passed it would shatter the prospects of Turco-Bulgarian friendship for ever. The Chamber, confronted with this dilemma, and not knowing how to reconcile the claims of justice

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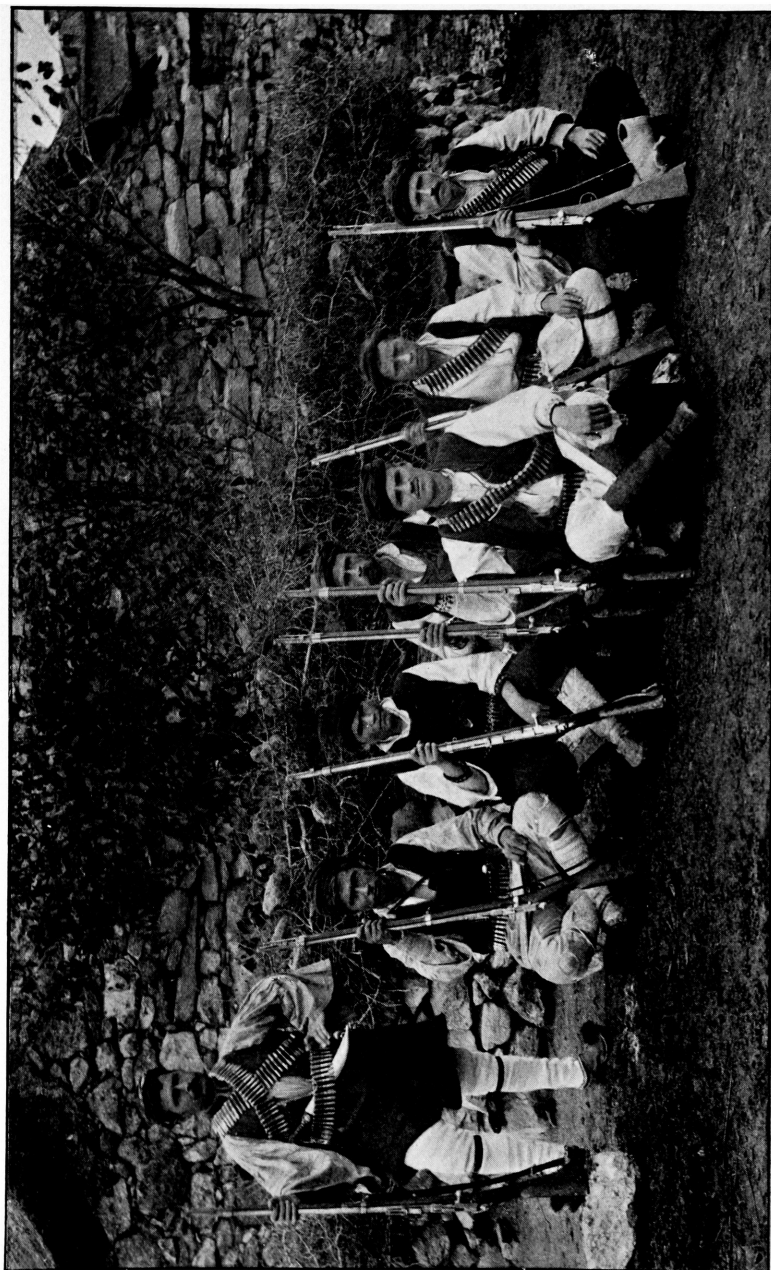
with the claims of political expediency, referred the Bill to a Parliamentary Committee, in which the Bulgarian side was represented by two Bulgarian deputies. This shows that, even when actuated by the best intentions, the Turks, owing to the very nature of the problem, cannot do more than flounder towards righteousness. No wonder that in trying to please both the antagonistic parties they end by offending both.

The Serbs have similar causes of offence arising from the official favour shown to their Bulgarian rivals, while among the Bulgars themselves there are many who, having no sympathy with Sandansky's party or a share in the spoils, complain loudly of want of fair treatment. The upshot of this universal discontent is the reanimation of the armed agitation that had devastated Macedonia until July, 1908, and ceased on the proclamation of the Constitution. The period of suspended anarchy then established seems to have come to an end. All the rival organisations appear to regard the armistice as a thing of the past and to be ready for a revival of the ancient internecine warfare. Already Bulgarian bands are reported as infesting the regions of central and north-eastern Macedonia, Greek bands as haunting the south and south-western districts, while in the northern parts the Servian *komitadjis*, who had gone to Servia when a rupture with Austria appeared imminent, are once more active in their familiar fields. To these Christian heroes must be added Mohammedan bands, consisting partly of Turkish Bashi-bazouks and partly of Albanian nationalists. Hence a rapid multiplication of political assassinations, each crime committed by one side

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leading to reprisals by the other. Thirty such crimes occurred during the first two months of last summer, some of them recalling the worst days of the pre-Revolution reign of terror. One of these happened while I was in Macedonia, at the beginning of May. A whole Greek family, consisting of husband, wife, the husband's aunt, and two maid-servants, was wiped off at one stroke by a band of Bulgarian assassins at Yenidje. A few weeks later a rich Bulgarian merchant, president of the Bulgarian community of Xanthe, was murdered by a band of Greek assassins. About the same time an attempt was made on the life of the Greek Bishop of Cassandra, who, while on tour in his diocese, was wounded by an Albanian ruffian.

All these sinister occurrences are so many danger signals. They all suggest that the tempest which had been lulled by the promise of liberty is on the point of breaking out again with a new violence. If this disagreeable forecast be realised, it is not improbable that internal anarchy will revive all the external perils which for ages menaced the existence of the Ottoman Empire. Among the prospective claimants to the Sick Man's inheritance the most formidable had long been Russia. Russia is not now in a position to profit by a dismemberment of Turkey. She may, therefore, be relied on to continue as long as possible the policy of benevolent neutrality she adopted soon after the Revolution of July, 1908. Another Power that has been coveting the Sultan's dominions almost as long as Russia is Austria, and Austria, though maintaining for the present an attitude of neutrality parallel to Russia's, has not the same reasons for considering herself indefinitely bound



A MACEDONIAN REVOLUTIONARY BAND.

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to a pledge of abstention. By the formal annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina she has consolidated her position in those provinces, and that consolidation may well prove the first step to expansion. The heir to the Austrian crown, who is now the real pilot of Austria's foreign policy, is credited with a programme the basis of which is the transformation of the Dual Monarchy into a triple federation, consisting of three great ethnic groups—the German, the Magyar and the Slavonic. The realisation of this plan implies an increase of the Slavonic element under the Hapsburg crown by the addition of the Servian populations still beyond the pale. The majority of the Servian race—Dalmatians, Croatians, Bosniaks and Herzegovinians—are already under Austrian rule, and there are reasons for justifying the fear which the independent branches of the same race—the inhabitants of Montenegro and Servia—entertain that Austria aims at their own absorption. Should this fear be fulfilled, it would be a miracle indeed if Austrian advance stopped there. Both logic and necessity would impel the conquerors to carry their conquests further south. Albania and Macedonia have long been regarded as the ultimate goal of Austrian ambition, and Austria's action in those regions has always been of a nature amply corroborating that view. It is true that by abandoning the *sandjak* of Novi Bazar to Turkey the Austrian Government appeared to belie the intentions attributed to it. But there are competent judges who pronounce that that act, apparently a proof of disinterestedness, was really prompted by strategic considerations. Experience, it is said, has demonstrated to the Austrian military authorities the fact that the

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occupation of that mountainous district wedged in between two hostile countries—Montenegro and Servia—was, from a strategic point of view, a source of weakness rather than of strength: that, in other words, when the time for action came, a far better road to Salonica lay through the Servian kingdom. Pending the arrival of such time, it is instructive to note that the Austrian Empire is devoting its best energies to the development of its fighting resources. The Austrian army was mobilised last autumn, and its mobilisation, though ostensibly directed against the Serbs and Montenegrins, was on a scale out of all proportion to those puny adversaries. Further, that display of strength was not abated by the settlement of the quarrel with Servia and Montenegro. I happened to be crossing the Montenegrin frontier two days after the conclusion of the agreement with the principality, and instead of seeing the Austrians relaxing their military activity, I found their warships practising their new quick-firing guns in the Bocche di Cattaro. I went on to Bosnia, and, although all danger of trouble there also was over, I found the garrison of Sarajevo engaged in grand manœuvres. Since that date Austria, whom nobody had hitherto suspected of aspiring to the rank of a great Maritime Power, has been seized by a novel fever for the increase of her navy to unprecedented proportions. Enormous sums have been voted for the creation of a squadron of Dreadnoughts, and it is reckoned that by 1912 she will have seven warships of that type afloat in the Adriatic. Naval manœuvres are the order of the day, and last spring a call of the naval reserves showed a deficit of only 5 per cent. instead of the

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20 per cent. for which the authorities had made allowance. What is the meaning of all these preparations on the part of a Power whose littoral is so limited in extent that it could be defended by the smallest of small fleets? It can only be inspired by the wish to increase the extent of that littoral. Such increase could only be made at the expense of Turkey. These preparations have induced Italy also—who has been for years past playing the part of Austria's rival in Albania—to proceed to corresponding naval armaments on her side.

If, leaving the Great Powers, we turn our eyes to the smaller suitors for the reversion of the Turkish inheritance, we find there also ample indications of a disquieting nature. The Servian dream of a Greater Serbia embraces a large portion of the territory loosely called "Macedonia," and especially the north-western districts of the *vilayet* of Kossovo still known as "Old Servia." Indeed, the recovery of this territory, lost to the Turks on June 15, 1389, when Lazar, the last free Kral of the Serbs, fell fighting for the faith, has long been regarded by Servian patriots as a preliminary towards the materialisation of the larger idea; and their sentimental ambition has been strengthened by the practical necessity of obtaining a free access to the sea. Until 1878 their efforts had been chiefly directed towards Bosnia and Herzegovina. But the occupation of those provinces by Austria demonstrated to them the futility of all attempts at expansion towards the west: the way to the Adriatic was barred to them. They therefore turned their eyes towards the south and the Ægean. They began to covet Salonica as a seaport. They pointed out that Bulgaria possesses two ports on the Black Sea, while Servia, hemmed

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in on every side by foreign territory, is obliged to depend for her trade entirely on the mercy of Austria-Hungary. The practical outcome of those aspirations was a scholastic propaganda which in 1904, owing to the terrorist methods employed from 1897 onwards by the rival Bulgarian propaganda, developed into a movement of armed resistance and retaliation. This movement was, as we saw, arrested by the Young Turk Revolution of July, 1908; but it has lately revived, partly on account of the internal conditions already described and partly on account of the fresh blow dealt at Servian idealism by Austria's definite incorporation of Bosnia and Herzegovina last October. The Serbs, baulked in their hopes of ever reaching the Adriatic, were impelled to turn their attention once more towards the Ægean. And their efforts promise to be more vigorous in the future than they have been in the past. The Servian Parliament has quite lately voted a new loan, which is to be expended on the purchase of guns, rifles, and river mines. This is but one out of many signs of a zeal for the improvement of the country's military resources—a zeal that has been fanned by Servia's recent narrow escape from Austrian aggression. But mere self-defence does not appear to be the object of these preparations. Nor is the Austrian peril from the north the only incentive to Servian warlike activity. The Servian bands in Macedonia are known to derive their inspiration and sustenance from Belgrade. Only the other day a Servian officer left his post as Military Attaché to King Peter's Legation at Sofia in order to join the revolutionary movement in Macedonia.

Even more formidable is the Bulgarian dream of a Greater Bulgaria, which includes in its scope nearly

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the whole of "Macedonia." The realisation of that dream has been pursued by the Bulgars for forty years with a tenacity, an energy, and a ferocity beside which the efforts of the Servian propaganda pale into insignificance. To the prosecution of its plans for expansion the Bulgarian State has consistently devoted all its diplomatic and the major portion of its financial resources; and its propaganda for the absorption of Macedonia is backed by an army which has cost Bulgaria untold sacrifices. It would be absurd to imagine that an ambition which has for so long been the mainspring of Bulgaria's national policy, an object for the attainment of which so many years of labour and so many millions of money have been expended, a dream which has become the favourite obsession of every Bulgarian politician and patriot, has been abandoned. It is true that the success of the Young Turk Revolution in July, 1908, induced the Sofia statesmen to adopt an attitude of admiration, not to say of affection, towards the powers that be at Constantinople. But that attitude was entirely prompted by considerations of political expediency, the force of which depends upon the course of events and may be modified at any moment. The declaration of Bulgaria's complete independence from the Sultan last October, the seizure of the Turkish Oriental Railway in Eastern Roumelia, and the assumption by Prince Ferdinand of the title of "Tsar of the Bulgars"—a term deliberately intended to comprise the Bulgarian populations of Macedonia—were all sufficiently plain indications of the spirit which continues to animate Bulgarian statesmanship. That Bulgaria's friendship for Turkey is strictly dependent on the amount of profit that Bulgarian politicians

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expect to derive from the Turks is proved by the hostile tone Sofia immediately assumed on hearing that the Ottoman Parliament contemplated to settle the Greco-Bulgarian dispute about the Macedonian churches and schools in a manner which, though consistent with equity and legality, was detrimental to Bulgarian interests. It is true that the Internal Organisation in Macedonia is for the moment detached from the Central Organisation at Sofia. But the leaders of the Internal Organisation—Sandansky & Co.—have already been condemned to death by their former associates at Sofia, and the whole of Bulgaria's history shows that such a sentence is not likely to remain a dead letter except so long as it suits Bulgarian policy. When the moment for anti-Turkish action in Macedonia comes, Sandansky and his friends will have either to obey the orders of the Central Organisation or cease to exist. That moment seems to be drawing near. All that the Sofia authorities are waiting for is to see how things are going to shape themselves in the Ottoman Empire. Any sign of a collapse given by the Young Turkish edifice will be the signal for a forward march from the Bulgarian side. The vigilance with which that side watches the progress of Turkish affairs and the readiness with which it is prepared to turn a Young Turk calamity to account were amply illustrated last April. As soon as news reached Sofia of the outbreak of open hostilities between the Committee and its opponents, M. Malinoff, the Bulgarian Premier, declared that Bulgaria could not remain indifferent to what was going on in Turkey, that it was the duty of the Bulgars to intervene if the revival of the Ottoman Empire was to be effected at the

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expense of Bulgarian interests in Macedonia. These expressions, when divested of their diplomatic vagueness, amounted to a declaration that Bulgaria, despite her amicable professions, reserves to herself the right to act whenever she deems that the success or the failure of the Ottoman Constitution menaces the realisation of the Bulgarian dream.

Greece, too, in the event of a collapse of the Ottoman Constitution, nourishes a dream of aggrandisement at Turkey's expense, and if Greek patriots have hitherto pursued the realisation of that dream without the single-minded concentration of purpose that has distinguished Bulgarian endeavour, they seem to be anxious now to make up for lost time. Since 1904 the Hellenic movement in Macedonia, invigorated by the very terrorism with which its Bulgarian rival tried to crush it, has given abundant evidence of its vitality. The Greek bands have proved more than a match for the Bulgarian bands. The one respect in which the Bulgarian propaganda had the advantage over the Hellenic was the support of the Bulgarian army, upon which it could rely as a last resource. The statesmen of Athens seem to have at last grasped the truth that national claims are powerless unless they are backed by a sufficient array of national bayonets, and, spurred by the Young Turks' bellicose attitude towards Greece over the Cretan question, they are now making strenuous efforts to imitate the example set by their adversaries at Sofia. Greece appears now determined to raise her military and naval organisation to a degree of efficiency more commensurate with the magnitude of her aspirations.

CHAPTER XX

DOUBTS

WHEREVER we look—be it in the interior of the Ottoman Empire or on its frontiers—we find ourselves faced by a host of forces which seem to militate against the integrity of Young Turkey. And when we examine the measures which Young Turkey is taking to meet these forces, we cannot but be impressed by the want of proportion between the peril and the available means for combating it. The army under the pernicious rule of Abdul Hamid sank into a depth of disorganisation for which even the individual Turkish soldier's admirable qualities cannot compensate. For many years manœuvres were forbidden, gun practice was discouraged, and the discipline suffered by the cruel hardships to which the men were subjected as well as by the systematic suspicion entertained by the palace towards every officer who ventured to give evidence of superior merit. The navy suffered even more sorely from the effects of a policy the sole aim of which was the preservation of the Sovereign's personal power. Abdul Hamid feared his fleet more sincerely than he feared his army. Consequently he worked towards its destruction with the same zeal with which other monarchs have worked towards the per-

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fection of theirs. Millions were squandered on ships which were neither fit nor meant to go to sea, but were destined to rot in sempiternal immobility. The dockyards were encumbered with machinery bought at exorbitant prices to rust unused. Enormous contracts were signed ostensibly for the construction of cruisers or the purchase of naval guns, but really for the enrichment of the persons who signed them. All this was done under the auspices of the Sultan, who saw in the putrefaction of his navy and the means employed to accomplish it a source of genial merriment. It is related that on one occasion he and his courtiers were witnessing the feats of a juggler who swallowed knives of a prodigious size with a marvellous facility and no signs of indigestion. The courtiers were loud in their expressions of wonder. "Oh, there is nothing very wonderful in this," remarked his Majesty with a smile; "I have here," pointing to the Minister for the Marine, "a friend who has been known to swallow with equal facility not knives but whole battleships."

Since the Revolution of July, 1908, the Young Turks have made heroic efforts to rescue both the army and the navy from their deplorable dilapidation. German officers have been engaged to instruct the army and British officers to evolve some sort of order out of the chaos that constituted the navy. But it will take a long time before the evils of the corruption of ages can be effaced. The Young Turks in their endeavours to reconstruct the fighting machinery find themselves hindered by two obstacles: first, the demoralisation of both soldiers and sailors owing to the part both classes have been made to

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take in the recent political convulsions, and secondly, by want of funds. The ambitious design to order a number of Dreadnoughts had to be abandoned last June, when it was found that the naval budget did not permit such luxuries. All the money that could be spared was to be devoted to the army, the condition of which had been brought to light in a startling manner last March by the resignation of two successive commanders of the 4th Army Corps, and of several senior officers of the 2nd Army Corps, due to dissatisfaction with the state of the service. But there are small hopes of a rapid improvement in either service. Never was the Turkish Treasury more depleted than it is at the present hour.' The financial administration of Abdul Hamid was inspired by the same selfish spirit as the rest of his policy. The Exchequer was systematically drained by the palace, and while the government of the Empire was conducted mostly on credit, the Civil List absorbed all the ready cash. How easily this was done can be seen from a single illustration. A few years ago a certain journalist called on the Minister of Finance. He found him in a state of great distress.

"What is the matter, Excellency?" he asked.

"I shall go mad," replied the Minister. "I had just managed to scrape together the money needed for the payment of one month's salaries to the State functionaries, when an imperial *iradé* arrived ordering me to send to the palace £T.300,000. I was, of course, obliged to obey, and now I do not know what to do."

Thus the service of the State was starved, while untold millions were squandered by the *seraglio*.

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The provinces, though rich by nature, were sterilised by misrule. They were entrusted to Court parasites, who, devoid of experience or principle, had for their sole economic maxim to extort from the people under their charge enough to satisfy the cupidity of their patrons at Yildiz Kiosk as well as their own. The result has been a public penury against which the Young Turks have hitherto fought in vain. Immediately on the establishment of the Constitution steps were taken to restrict the lavish expenditure of the palace and to bring the financial administration of the Empire under the control of the Porte. A French economist was entrusted with the Herculean task of establishing some kind of equilibrium in the Budget. That Budget had not known what a balance between income and outlay meant for ages, because for ages the floating debt increased steadily, compelling Government after Government to mortgage revenue after revenue in order to cover the various loans contracted for the purpose of meeting current expenditure. Thus deficit was added to deficit and debt was piled on debt, until there was nothing left to mortgage and the limits of taxation were reached. Retrenchment and the spoliation of Abdul Hamid have failed to stop the gaps made by his extravagance. The estates that were taken from the Sultan after the July Revolution added little to the revenues of the Empire. The sums that were squeezed out of him after the April counter-revolution did not go very far towards filling the Exchequer. Neither did the few millions received from Austria by way of compensation for the State lands in the lost provinces. All these were mere drops in a dry pond. The Young Turks hoped that the friendly

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Powers would show their friendliness in a manner more substantial and more helpful than that of words. But so far those hopes have not been fulfilled. Offers of pecuniary assistance have been made by Germany, but they were coupled with conditions which the Young Turks could not safely accept. Their wish is to depart from the hand-to-mouth existence which had brought the Empire to its state of chronic bankruptcy, not to perpetuate it. Nor do they wish to increase their obligations to the usurious financiers who have exploited them both economically and politically with such a singular want of scruple in the past. They need more disinterested creditors in the future. But these creditors naturally wait until the constitutional edifice is consolidated and security is established before they can be induced to invest their capital. Now, how can these blessings be effected without the aid of foreign capital? It is obvious that without money the best reform schemes are mere wastepaper. All the branches of the administration must remain in their old state of putrefaction, and not only is the construction of any public works impossible, but even ordinary tranquillity cannot be restored until money is found. While I was in Constantinople the Minister of Police demanded again and again from the Minister of the Interior that the police agents of the capital should be paid without further delay the arrears due to them for months. His demand was passed on to the Minister of Finance—and there it stayed. Again, the other day the Minister of Public Works, when reproached by the Chamber for doing nothing, triumphantly retorted: "Give me money and I will give you roads!" It is quite as obvious that the only source

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from which the necessary money can come is foreign capital, and foreign capital is willing to come—provided Turkey is reformed!

This is one of the many puzzles that make up the vicious circle of the Ottoman problem. It is no wonder that Ottoman statesmen have so far been unable to find an opening in the perplexing periphery of the circle. Their bewilderment has its amusing aspect. On the morning of March 13th, for instance, the Chamber had met and was just settling down to talk, when it recalled that the financial year had expired on the previous night, and the Government had not yet submitted to the House the estimates for the forthcoming year! Here was a nice state of affairs for a parliamentarily governed country. The President was at once requested to go to the telephone and ask the Grand Vizier what was the meaning of it all. The Grand Vizier immediately sent for the Minister of Finance and the French gentleman who was in charge of the Budget, and asked them in his turn what was the meaning of it all. The meaning of the muddle was this. The Budget had been presented to the Porte by the Minister of Finance as early as January 31st; but as it showed a deficit of some £6,000,000 the Porte decided to have it revised, so that the distance between income and outlay might be reduced to more plausible dimensions. The Budget was revised, but, in spite of all the ingenuity that had been brought to bear upon it, it still showed a deficit of over £3,000,000. Moreover, it would not be ready to be laid before Parliament for a few days. So the Grand Vizier, at his wits' end, promised to submit to the House by seven o'clock an Emergency Bill approving

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provisionally two-twelfths of the Budget. It was all the poor Grand Vizier could do to appease the wrath of the Parliament. But the wrath of the Parliament was not appeased. When the Emergency Bill turned up in the evening it met with a most uncordial reception. Hon. members seized the opportunity for denouncing the Government for its unbusiness-like proceedings and finally agreed to sanction nothing more than one-twelfth of the Budget. Since that date things have not improved in substance, though my friend Djavid Bey, now Minister of Finance, has by several ingenious twists managed to produce a Budget which shows something like an equilibrium—on paper.

Such are the military and financial resources with which the Ottoman Empire would fain meet the political storm when it bursts.

This ominous state of affairs is, no doubt, due in some measure to causes of unrest, distrust, and distress for which the Young Turks are not responsible. The disease they undertook to cure was too chronic to yield even to the constitutional panacea. But a better success might have been attained had the methods used been a little less crude. For it can hardly be questioned that a good deal of the revival of the trouble is due to the national animosities which the Young Turks have done nothing to allay. Their treatment of political opponents of their own creed after, as well as their attitude towards the non-Turkish elements both before and after, the counter-revolution of last April show how much easier it is to make a Constitution than to develop the constitutional temperament. They may describe their victories and their revenges,

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their essays in legislation, and their experiments in statecraft as Liberal—there is no harm in a name. But the critical onlooker of their exploits cannot help being impressed by the fact that they have all been characterised by an intolerance and a narrowness that form the very negation of Liberalism.

Of course, all this was to be expected. Men never show to better advantage than at the moment when they conquer their freedom from one apparently more powerful than themselves. The struggle calls forth the noblest of human qualities. Every subsequent achievement must partake of the nature of an anti-climax. Revolutions begin with patriotism and end in politics. Now a multitude of politicians, even of good politicians, is of all the curses a country may be afflicted with, perhaps, the most pernicious. Turkey, since July, 1908, has had more than her fair share of this affliction. But the mischief would have been less serious were it not for the fact that the spirit which has moved Turkish politics since July, 1908, has been the military spirit—a spirit that brooks no opposition and understands not compromise.

That, too, was to be expected. The Revolution was the work of soldiers rather than of statesmen; and soldiers may be excellent patriots and very bad politicians. The Young Turks, by their conduct in and out of Parliament, have proved their wealth of patriotism and their want of political sense. Their successes and their failures alike spring from the same source. The Young Turks are men devoted to one idea, and in their efforts to realise that idea they are prepared to spare neither themselves nor any one else. They dream of a Turkey of the future more

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powerful, because more pure, than the Turkey of the past—an Empire which, as soon as it has arranged its domestic affairs more or less, will strive at expansion abroad. Indiscreet patriots are talking of a time when the Constitution will recover the countries which the Autocracy had lost. That time, if it ever comes, is too distant to cause any immediate anxiety to those whom it may concern, but the mere utterance of these sentiments merits attention as significant of the genius that inspires Liberal Turkey—the genius of militant Ottomanism. The Turkish Government has repeatedly declared its wish to live at peace with the whole world, and, in the actual state of the Turkish army and Treasury, there is no reason to doubt the sincerity of that wish. But those who read the *Yeni Gazeta* and the *Tanin*, and see the ferocity with which the sensible foreign policy of the Government is criticised by these and other fervid exponents of Young Turk idealism, are able to distinguish between a moderation imposed by prudence and an intemperate ambition which refuses to recognise the very need of moderation. Again, the Ottoman Parliament has passed many motions in favour of arbitration treaties, peace conferences, and other things conducive to international friendliness. But those who have listened to the bellicose speeches made in the same House on the Bosnian, Bulgarian, and especially on the Cretan question, and to the applause which greeted those effusions, could not but discount the pacific professions of Young Turkey. Only a few weeks ago a clerical deputy roused the House to frenetic enthusiasm by declaring that every stone of Crete represented the head of a Turkish

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soldier and that every inch of its soil was saturated with Turkish blood. It is easy to overrate the importance of these outbursts of rhetorical patriotism, whether they take place in Parliament or in the Press, but it is not so easy to overlook them.

The fruit of this militant disposition—this blind devotion to one idea—has hitherto been two revolutions, one change of monarch, and five changes of Ministry, all within nine months. At this hour Turkey is on the eve of a sixth ministerial crisis: a section of the Committee being dissatisfied with Hilmi Pasha's "weakness."

How could it be otherwise? The instrument used for the establishment of the Constitution was the army, the instrument used for the confirmation and the restoration of the Committee's parliamentary supremacy was again the army—an army which has long been a prey to political agitation. The Committee itself, after its April triumph, with a modesty the true meaning of which remains something of a mystery, took great pains to persuade the world that it had nothing to do with the victory or its consequences. It was all the work of the Army of the Avengers, said the Young Turks. That army was the representative of the nation, the faithful executor of the national will, the guardian of the Constitution, not the servant of the Committee. Now, this assertion was literally true, only the limits of demarcation between the Committee and the army were not visible to the ordinary eye. All the officers of the army were members of the Committee, though, of course, all the members of the Committee were not officers in the army. The truth is that the two were

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related to each other as the hand is related to the head.

How long would they be able to maintain those harmonious relations? We touch here again upon the old psychological problem. Both the civil and military forces of Young Turkey had again united for a common purpose, but would the union between elements so fundamentally divergent outlast the accomplishment of the object which had united them? It was not long before notes of dissonance came to mar the harmony. During the first fortnight after their joint victory rumours were heard in Constantinople of a breach between Mahmud Shevket Pasha and the Committee. The inspired organs, it is true, hastened to contradict these rumours, describing them as fantastic fabrications due to the malignant fertility of the reactionary mind: "The nefarious partisans of the old *régime*, those men who, under the cloak of Liberalism, worked only for the destruction of the constitutional edifice, it is they who are obviously bent on throwing suspicion upon the leaders of Young Turkey. It is a continuation of the same dark and tortuous policy which has already caused so much mischief"; thus wrote one of these advocates on May 15th. "Why should there be any discrepancy of view? The army has not marched on Constantinople in order to support one political party or another. It has organised the expedition which ended in the glorious entry of the troops into the capital, only in order to consolidate the constitutional *régime*, shaken by criminal and skilful hands. It will remain in the post that the National Assembly has entrusted to it until the reactionary forces are com-

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pletely annihilated. But, as soon as the army has purged the country thoroughly of all those who, whether through ignorance or self-interest, oppose its renaissance and prosperity, it will resign the reins to the hands of the responsible Ministers. Meanwhile as the main concern of both the army and the Committee is the same—purification and consolidation—there can be no occasion for any quarrel between the two. For the rest, their functions are sufficiently distinct to prevent any friction. The army holds aloof from politics, confining itself to the maintenance of order and the preservation of the country's integrity. It does not meddle with the mission of the Committee, which can work in the Chamber through those of its members who have a seat there."

Such were the declarations made by the Dictator at the very moment when he was dictating to the Chamber the laws already described. Needless to say, these declarations, being so flagrantly at variance with facts, convinced only those who wished to be convinced. All others continued to watch the progress of affairs with a scepticism which was speedily confirmed by events. The Committee had long cherished the scheme of perpetuating its control over the Government by the creation of Under Secretaries of State, who, having a seat both in the House and in the Cabinet, and being at the same time members of the Committee, should be able to direct the policy of the country in accordance with the Committee's views. That scheme was brought into the Chamber early in June, and was rejected by a majority chiefly consisting of Liberal Turks, Arabs, and Greeks—that is, by the elements of the old

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Opposition, which seemed to have suddenly received new life. Whence did they derive their miraculous reanimation? The Committee's answer was "personal motives." That had been its habitual explanation of all opposition to its plans, no matter where it came from. But it proved as unconvincing on this as it had on former occasions. Personal jealousies no doubt contributed their share to the Committee's defeat; but a much more adequate explanation may be found in the facts themselves. Before the counter-revolution of April 13th, the civilian leaders of the Committee had controlled the Chamber and the Cabinet, relying on the support of the school-trained officers who belonged to their organisation. The capture of the capital and the deposition of Abdul Hamid put the real power into the hands of those school-trained officers, who, while sympathising with the aims of the Committee, do not in all cases admire the means it employs in carrying them out. The plain English of this is that the Committee and the army are no longer pulling together and that the army has got the upper hand. The rejection of the Committee's pet scheme by the Chamber would have been impossible had not the Opposition been supported by the Dictator. The vote has unveiled this new breach in the ranks of the Young Turk camp and has illustrated a most significant development of the victory of April 24th—a development unexpected perhaps by the Committee, but anticipated by all cool spectators of the course of Turkey's parliamentary career. What the ultimate upshot of this breach will be it is hard to foretell. A good many members of the Ottoman Parliament dare not even guess. Taught by

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recent experience how dangerous it is to take sides prematurely, they prefer to sit on the fence. More than fifty deputies, when the decisive debate on the Committee's proposal took place, left the House rather than commit themselves by voting for or against it. Their timidity is perfectly intelligible. But if the past is any index to the future, the struggle between the civil and military elements of Young Turkey can end in one way only. The Committee in April had insisted that the army was not its servant. Before the end of June it must have begun to see that it was becoming its master.

For the neutral onlooker, the one interesting lesson that a comprehensive survey of Turkey's history since the Revolution of July, 1908, yields is that the Ottoman horse is once more on its trial, and the betting on it must depend on the would-be gambler's estimate of probabilities. In the multitude of spectators who are watching the performance it is possible to recognise all the familiar types of a turf crowd. There are among them persons who like to take a sporting chance because it is exciting. There are persons who prefer to bet on a certainty because it is safer. There are also persons who, troubling little about a serious examination of chances, like to stake their money on a name that happens to appeal to their imagination. This last method of investment is the most picturesque of all. But it presupposes a romantic temperament. To all persons blessed with such a temperament "Constitutional Turkey," with its motto of "Liberty, Equality and Fraternity," must make an irresistible appeal. It is a fascinating name. To less sanguine speculators the horse that bears it must long remain

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an object of conjecture slightly tinged with incredulity. They see that the Ottoman Empire is passing through a stage of transition, the ultimate outcome of which cannot be predicted, but the most salient characteristic of which at present is a great instability. The Sick Man is undergoing a violent operation which may lead to his recovery or to his final dissolution. Sir Edward Grey the other day described the patient's state as "exceedingly difficult, but exceedingly hopeful." For my part, having visited the invalid and felt his pulse, I cordially subscribe to the adjective "difficult." As to the "hopeful"—well, there is no harm in hoping that I know of.

To conclude, it would be utterly premature to prophesy that the Ottoman Constitution, having risen like a rocket, will come down like the stick. But it would be equally unwise to close the eyes to the dangers that encompass it. The ideal salvation for Turkey would be if some Power, human or divine matters little, provided it is strong and disinterested, took her under its tutelage for a generation, defended her against aggression from without, financed and educated her within, and having seen her safely upon the road, left her then to go on her way free, self-reliant, and rejoicing. But, like other ideals, this also must remain—an ideal.

CHAPTER XXI

THE QUESTION OF CRETE

THE rattling of the crane and the clanging of chains have ceased ; the throbbing and thudding of the engines have begun ; and the shores of Turkey are gliding slowly away. The turmoil of revolutions and counter-revolutions lies behind me, and before me spreads the promise of two days' peaceful communion with other than political elements. It is a brief respite, and it behoves me to make the most of it while it lasts.

Ah, it is good to let one's eye rest once more on the sunlit bosom of the *Ægean*, to see the blue sea below smiling placidly back to the blue sky of Greece above, and to listen once more to the melodious monotone of the Mediterranean swell. It is good to go aft, and, leaning over the rail, to watch the broad track of broken foam swirling backwards in the vessel's wake. It is good to stand midships, and to glance down at the long gleaming waves, flecked with white, as they dance merrily against the sides of the vessel, streaking the face of the waters into a myriad patterns of liquid marble.

We pass many broad-bellied, blue-painted Greek boats bounding along, before the fresh salt breeze, with outspread wings, straining every shroud and

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lifting up their keels; and we pass many Greek islands, some lying low on the horizon, all but hidden in the luminous haze, others surging boldly heavenwards, with clusters of white cottages and green trees nestling in the arms of the brown hills. It is all like a midsummer day's dream; but a dream instinct with reality: delicate in colour, pure and clear in outline, full of life and of relief. Each island has its own peculiar physiognomy, each boat is an individual, yet they all blend into a symphony of beauty to which the lilt and toss of the hills contribute the necessary refrain.

There is nothing vague, nothing perplexing or confusing about Greek land and sea scape. The ideas it suggests are as limpid, as sane, as well defined as logic and daylight can make them. They can be seized, handled, and analysed like scientific data, and yet lose none of their artistic charm. Everything is built on a scale capable of comprehension by the human eye and mind. Nothing is disproportionate or monstrous. The Greek mountains do not terrify the beholder by their immensity like the Himalayas. They do not bring home to him his impotence and insignificance. They are content to captivate his admiration by their beauty. There is something almost human about their expression, and one can almost hear them talk. They have their moods, too: variable and mutable as the moods of any woman. In mid-day light they rest languidly against the sky, wrapped up in soft, grey semitones. But when the sun begins to decline towards the west, grey turns slowly into blue, blue deepens into purple, and purple pales, through an infinity of delicate grada-

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tions, into mauve, until all tints are swallowed up by final blackness.

And then to the dreams of the day succeed the diviner dreams of the night—dreams that can neither be seized nor analysed—dreams that impel to feeling rather than to thought. It is well : where to feel is bliss, who but a fool would think ? Far better to watch the dark waves, as they sway lazily to and fro, like vast sheets of molten silver, scintillating with phosphorescent foam in the dim starlight, and to listen to their mysterious music as they lap against the sides of the vessel with a long-drawn plaintive sigh. What the sea says to the stars no man may know. Her innumerable murmur ascends up to me, filling the salt-scented solitude with a tranquil melody, sad and soothing beyond the skill of human tongue. I lie back in my deck-chair, absorbed in that miraculous song of sound and silence, oblivious of the past, heedless of the future, indifferent to the present ; neither knowing nor caring to inquire too closely whether I am asleep or waking ; unharassed by any desire to discover a meaning or purpose in things—lost in that state of beatific lassitude of body and soul so dear to the one whom some call idler and others poet, so rarely vouchsafed to the strenuous student of the dismal prose designated politics. . . .

I am roused to reality by a noise behind me. I turn round to find the jolly tars, in their flat caps and rolled-up trousers, swabbing the decks cheerfully. The sun is just rising, and the sea shimmers in the young morning light, while the sky is suffused with a rosy hue, rich and warm like a maiden's blush. Presently there heave in sight the lofty

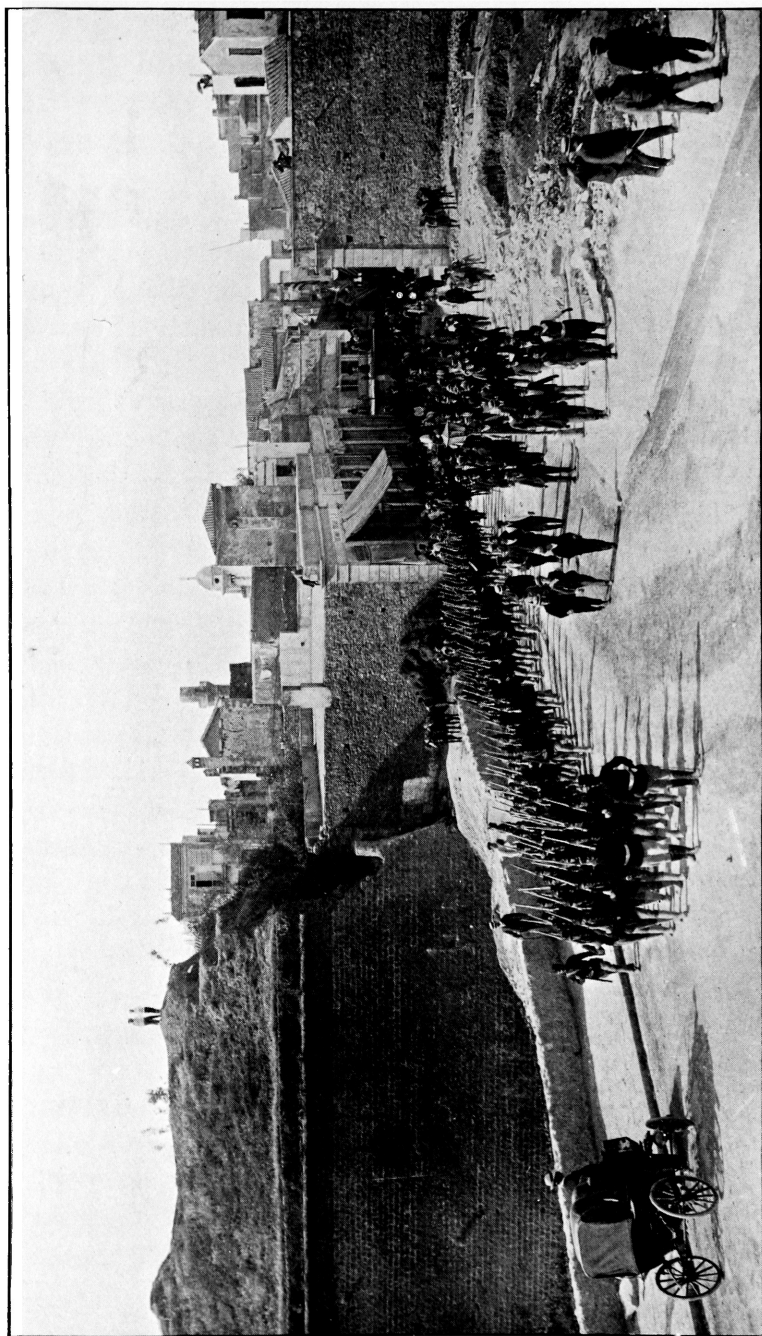
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mountains of Crete, their heights streaked with snow, their hollows studded with green olive groves, whirling windmills, and white villages clinging fungus-like to the steep hillsides. Along the shore spreads the town of Candia, its crenellated walls washed by the waves which dash against the bastions, dissolving into spray. Behind those Venetian walls peep three or four old Turkish minarets, and close by rises a new, ambitious building flanked with two turrets, from each of which floats the Greek flag.

We leave Candia behind us and proceed along the northern coast of the island towards Suda Bay, having on our left the proud peaks of the Ypsiloriti ridge—the tail of the great mountain serpent which, crawling through the whole length of the Balkan Peninsula, dives for a while beneath the blue waters of the Mediterranean to rise up again for the last time on these remote shores. They are grand and majestic, these snow-capped, sun-trodden crags of Crete. But, as they scowl down upon the sea, grey, stern, almost sullen, the impression wrought by them on the spectator is one of misery, desolation, and dumb, endless suffering. Their nakedness forms a clear and melancholy commentary on the Florentine poet's pitiful words :—

“Nel mezzo 'l mar siede un paese guasto,
Diss' egli allora, che s' appella Creta.”

Guasto—ruined—was the land even in Dante's day : ruined by repeated conquests and revolts, beginning with the Saracen invasion of the ninth century, when nearly the whole surviving population was



THE CRETAN MILITIA WITH ITS GREEK OFFICERS.

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forcibly converted to Islam, when nearly all the churches were turned into mosques, and the island which was once described as "most beautiful and fertile, the home of numberless men and of ninety cities" was reduced to a powerless and poverty-stricken semi-wilderness. Some hundred and fifty years later the Greeks of Constantinople recovered Crete, and reconverted the inhabitants to Christianity. For about two and a half centuries the Cretans were permitted to enjoy a certain measure of peace and prosperity under the ægis of the Byzantine Emperors, and then in 1204 came the hungry host of Western freebooters who conducted the Fourth Crusade, ostensibly for the liberation of the Holy Places from the Mohammedan yoke, really for the spoliation of the Christian Empire of the East. Crete fell to the share of Boniface, Marquis of Montferrat, who sold it to the Venetians for 10,000 marks. The Genoese disputed the possession of the island for some time, but the Venetians ultimately prevailed, and their rule proved even more cruel than that of the Moors had been. Oppression goaded the islanders to frequent insurrections, and these insurrections were crushed after a fashion that made of Crete the scene of devastation which Dante summarised in the terrible phrase, "un paese guasto."

Four and a half centuries thus passed—centuries of misery punctuated by twenty-seven desperate attempts at deliverance—until the Turkish conquest in 1669 came to complete the havoc wrought by the Venetians. Then a portion of the inhabitants, yielding to terror or to temptation, embraced the creed of the conquerors, while the rest either succumbed to

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Turkish tyranny or continued an intermittent struggle for freedom. The one section of the island that escaped slavery was the inaccessible district of Sphakia—a great natural fortress formed by the White Mountains in the south-west of the country. The Sphakiotes retained through the ages their freedom, their faith, and their Greek traditions unimpaired. To this day they preserve in their dialect many traces of their Doric descent. These hardy mountaineers acted as leaders in all the wars for independence which the Cretans waged against the Turk from the eighteenth century onwards. For if there is one characteristic that distinguishes the Cretan more than his indomitable passion for liberty it is his impregnable self-confidence—his inability to acknowledge defeat. This characteristic is illustrated by the whole of his tragic history for nearly two thousand years. No matter who the assailants were—disciplined as the Roman, impetuous as the Saracen, crafty as the Venetian, ferocious as the Turk—they all found in the Cretan people a prize hard to seize and harder still to retain. One is tempted to apply to these brave islanders the boastful epigram which a Frenchman composed for the glorification of his own countrymen :—

“ Le coq Cretois est le coq de la gloire,
Par les revers il n'est point abattu ;
Il chante fort, quand il gagne la victoire,
Plus fort encore, quand il bien battu ! ”

Vivid memorials of this secular tragedy meet our eye as we steam up Suda Bay. On one hand lies a rocky islet crowned with the remnants of an obsolete

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Venetian fortress ; on the opposite slope, frowning at it across the mouth of the Bay, stand the ruins of a Genoese fortress ; and at the head of the harbour, overlooking the township of Suda, beetles a Turkish fortress which fired its last shot a dozen years ago. This brings us to the latest act in the drama—the insurrection of 1896 which led to the expulsion of the Turkish troops from the island, the virtual recognition of its liberty by the Powers, and the relegation of the Sultan's flag to that rocky islet off the coast—a small red flag idly floating, at the time of my visit, side by side with the flags of the four Powers, England, France, Italy, and Russia, which have since 1897 taken Crete under their joint protection. But on the island itself there is not the faintest vestige of the Sultan's suzerainty. A few months before my arrival some of the international forces had already left Crete, and in front of the barracks of the forces which still remained there flew their respective flags, together with the flag of free Crete. Elsewhere in the island, over the public buildings, one found flying the flag of the Greek kingdom.

That had been the case since October, 1908, when the Cretans, on receipt of the news that Bulgaria had thrown off the last traces of the Ottoman domination, decided that the hour had struck for them also to realise their national dream by union with the Greek motherland. For the realisation of that dream they had fought ever since 1821. But though every time beaten, by the opposition of European diplomacy rather than by the power of the Ottoman arms, they persevered with characteristic tenacity, until, in 1897, Europe deigned to acknowledge their right to breathe.

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What those bids for freedom cost the hapless islanders may be seen at every turn. In many a decimated village, in many a devastated forest and olive grove, in many a deserted homestead, there seem to linger still the ghosts of a recent past, whispering of struggles and sorrows, of perennial misrule, of agonies borne in silence and wrongs washed out in blood. The very first object that greets the visitor's eye as he lands is a row of stone buildings, standing roofless and forlorn on the bare sea-coast, close to the township of Suda. They are the ruins of buildings destroyed during the troubles of 1896-97.

All these woes might have been avoided had the selfish and shortsighted old dame we call European diplomacy lent an ear to the dictates of common humanity and common sense in 1829, when were drawn the frontiers of liberated Greece. And it is humiliating to reflect that the chief responsibility for this deplorable miscarriage of justice and statesmanship lies with England. Two years earlier Canning had stoutly resisted Russia's designs, declaring that "the support of this country should never be given to any scheme for disposing of the Greeks without their own consent." In 1829-30 also English statesmen like Lords Holland, Melbourne, Lansdowne, John Russell, and Palmerston insisted that all the Greek lands which had fought for independence should be included in the Greek Kingdom, for they recognised that an imperfect solution of the problem was almost worse than no solution at all. No permanent peace was to be hoped for so long as populations that had once nearly shaken off the yoke were forced to suffer under it, and so long as there was a free, though

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crippled, kingdom impelled both by sentiment and by interest to foster the aspirations of the kinsmen left in slavery. "My lords," said Lord Holland with truly prophetic insight in 1830, "the day will come when we shall rue the errors of which our Government have been guilty, when our neglect of the opportunity of adding Candia to the territories of Greece will reflect upon ourselves with a force of which no man can see the remote consequences. However wise, however prudent, the head of the Greek Government may be, he must either connive at his own subjects carrying on clandestine intercourse with the insurgents in Candia, or he must openly espouse the cause of their oppressed brethren. If such be his determination, what then will be the consequence? A new war, which may embroil all the Powers of Europe in dispute." However, these wise words fell on unheeding ears. The reins of British diplomacy were no longer in the hands of a statesman like Canning, but in those of a soldier like Wellington—a man far wiser in the camp than in the council. The Duke wanted a small and feeble Greece, lest peradventure a great and powerful Greece should endanger England's position in the Ionian islands—lands which England herself a generation later gave to Greece as being indispensable to the little kingdom and useless to herself! The Duke's narrow policy prevailed, and the upshot was some seventy years of additional waste of human blood.

As Lord Holland foresaw, Greece was bound, openly or secretly, to assist the Cretans in their repeated efforts at deliverance, and to succour them in their failures, with disastrous results to herself. The

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first foreign loan contracted by the Greek kingdom was contracted for the relief of Cretan refugees, one-third of the Greek public debt is due to the same cause, and it was, again, on behalf of Crete that Greece undertook her calamitous war with Turkey in 1897. It was only then that Europe felt compelled to recognise the heroism of the act, to connive at its folly, and the island was granted autonomy under a Greek prince. But even then European diplomacy shrank from a definite solution. The concession of local independence, as was anticipated, did not satisfy the Cretans. They looked upon it as only the first step towards complete national rehabilitation, and they continued to demand union with Greece. The Powers tacitly admitted the legitimacy of the demand by conferring on King George the right of nominating the High Commissioner of the island, by placing the local militia and gendarmerie under the capable command of picked Greek officers, and by withdrawing their own troops.

These concessions were the result of an agreement between the four protecting Powers and the Cretan people; the former pledging themselves to consider benevolently Cretan aspirations, if the latter showed themselves worthy of such consideration by their conduct. The Cretans fulfilled their part of the agreement in a manner that has earned them universal praise.

During the dozen years that elapsed since the departure of the Ottoman garrison the secular feud between Christian and Mohammedan ceased. Crimes became as rare as they were formerly common. The population, despite the tendency to emigration to

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America which is noticeable in all parts of the Near East, increased by 12 per cent. Education made an astonishing progress, the Christians having 632 primary and 31 secondary schools with 35,000 pupils of both sexes, the Mohammedans 18 schools with 2,000 pupils. In the open country vineyards and olive groves are blooming once more over tracts of land which a decade ago lay fallow, and in the towns new buildings are rapidly multiplying. The military establishment of the island bears eloquent witness to this general movement of recovery and recuperation from the anarchy of centuries. The gendarmerie and the militia present an object-lesson in efficiency and smartness of which any European country might be proud. Both forces are armed with the latest rifle, and the conditions of life in the ranks are such as to render service highly popular among the warlike islanders. There is no more pleasant sight in Crete than a column of these native troops, with their stalwart forms and handsome, intelligent faces, marching through a crowded street. They step soberly along, in their white tunics and top-boots, their black petticoat knee-breeches flopping rhythmically behind them; and the civilian population greets them with patriotic satisfaction.

In brief, though the island cannot yet be described as a paradise of prosperity, it has made such advance on the path to civilisation as might be expected from the mediocrity of its resources, the magnitude of the calamities it had endured for so many centuries, and the niggardliness of the financial support vouchsafed to it by the Powers that took it under their protection. It may well be doubted

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whether in all its history Crete had ever enjoyed greater tranquillity than during the period when it was left to manage its own affairs. The only thing that still remained to complete the emancipation of the island and to assure its pacific evolution was its union with the mother country—the ideal for which the Cretans had fought since 1821, and for which they are prepared again to risk all.

Sentiment apart, they have very cogent, practical reasons for regarding local independence as inadequate. Crete, they pointed out to me, is neither big enough nor rich enough to stand alone. Independence would mean a separate administration, a separate army and navy, a separate diplomatic service, and all those expensive luxuries which would absorb the slender resources of the island—resources that are urgently needed for the construction of roads, the afforestation of mountains, the development of agriculture, the promotion of education, and the thousand-and-one material improvements wanted by a country just awakening to civilisation. Further, political independence is fatal to Cretan commerce. Turkey, some years ago, tacitly acknowledged the island's severance from the Ottoman Empire by placing Cretan imports on the same footing as foreign imports. Greece, on the other hand, so long as the island remains under the Sultan's nominal suzerainty, however shadowy that may be, is obliged to treat Cretan imports as foreign imports. Now, both Turkey and Greece have a high protective tariff, and so Cretan traders, belonging no longer to the one State nor yet to the other, find themselves in the hopeless position of being penalised by both. Lastly,

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the island for its economic revival stands in need of foreign capital, and foreign capital refuses to flow into it until its political future is decided. All these practical considerations strengthen the Cretan claim for union with Greece in the eyes of those who have small patience with mere sentimental aspirations.

The Cretan people, encouraged by the sympathetic consideration which their claim had so far received from the protecting Powers, proceeded, as I have already stated, last October to proclaim their union with the mother country. At the moment of my arrival that union appeared to be an accomplished fact. The Cretan flag had, except outside the barracks of the foreign troops still stationed in the island and on the rocky islet in Suda Bay, been superseded by the white and blue stripes of the Greek kingdom; the civil and military officials acted as servants of the Greek crown, to which they had solemnly sworn allegiance; the whole administration was carried on in the name of King George; and the name "Hellas" stared one in the face even on the stamps which one bought at the post-offices. The Powers, while abstaining from an explicit ratification of this state of affairs, conveyed their implicit approval by continuing their normal diplomatic relations with the provisional government which the Cretans had set up pending the formal incorporation of their island into the Greek kingdom.

The attitude of the Powers, was, for once, perfectly rational. They could not deny that the step taken by the Cretans was the logical corollary of the situation which they themselves had created. It was understood from the beginning that the autonomy granted

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to the island in 1898 was merely provisional. The appointment of a Greek royal prince as High Commissioner for three years, the periodical renewal of his mandate, the presence of international troops—everything pointed to a state of transition, preparatory to a definite settlement. Later still, the Powers, by conferring on King George the right to nominate the High Commissioner, by placing the military forces of the island under officers of the Greek army, and finally by withdrawing their own troops, gave to the Cretans a clear hint of their decision to leave them free to realise their secular dream. Further, whenever the Cretans asked for permission to join Greece, they were met with the answer, not that their wish was unreasonable, but that the moment was inopportune—that the union of Crete with Greece might lead to a disturbance of the *status quo* in the Near East. Now, that contention had obviously lost its force when the *status quo* was disturbed by Bulgaria's annexation of Eastern Roumelia and by Austria's annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Cretans argued that their own action was infinitely less revolutionary and much more justifiable than Bulgarian and Austrian action. It involved no breach of any compact. The island was already, to all intents and purposes, independent of Turkey. It did not pay, like Eastern Roumelia, any tribute to the Sultan. Commercially it had, unlike Eastern Roumelia, long been treated as a foreign country by the Sultan's own Government. The Mohammedan element in the island formed an insignificant minority when compared with the Mohammedan element in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In those provinces it is represented by 600,000 souls

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out of a total population of 1,600,000. In Crete it is limited to 30,000 out of a total population of 300,000. It was inconceivable that the Powers which had connived at the Austrian and Bulgarian *coups*, carried out as they were in flagrant violation of international treaties, should condemn the Cretan step taken as that was with all due regard to international susceptibilities. For, although Greece naturally would be only too glad to satisfy the Cretan and her own national aspirations by annexing the island, she scrupulously refrained from doing so out of a wish not to add to the embarrassments which harassed Young Turkey at the moment, and left the matter to the decision of the European Areopagus.

This self-control was gratefully recognised not only by the Powers but by the Porte itself. The Grand Vizier, Kiamil Pasha, more than once, and especially in a speech he made in the Ottoman Parliament on January 13th, declared that the Cretan problem was a matter the settlement of which lay wholly in the hands of the Powers, and he paid a tribute to the correct attitude of the Greek Government. Other Turkish statesmen maintained a similar tone. It was, indeed, almost impossible to imagine that Turkey, which had acquiesced in the loss of Bosnia, Herzegovina, and Eastern Roumelia—all provinces in which it still possessed solid interests—for a consideration, should refuse similar compensation for an island where its rights were literally confined to a few square inches of red calico floating idly from a desert rock. There were other reasons justifying the belief that the Porte would raise no serious opposition to the union of Crete with Greece. The island had never

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been productive of anything but trouble to the Turks. Its possession had cost them enormous sacrifices in men and money. These sacrifices might perhaps have been intelligible in the old days when Turkey aspired to dominion over the Mediterranean. Those were the glorious days when a Turkish army occupied North Africa from Egypt to Morocco, and a Turkish fleet besieged Malta and threatened Marseilles. But those days have gone by. Turkey has never been a maritime Power. Even in those days of ephemeral successes by sea, the Turks cheerfully acknowledged their lack of aptitude for a naval career by saying, as the contemporary English diplomat, Sir Paul Ricaut, reports, "God has given the sea to the infidels, but the land to the faithful." This was written at the very moment when the Turks had wrested Crete from the Venetians. A generation later the French traveller, Tournefort, bore similar testimony to Turkish naval incompetence: "The pilots of the Grand Seignior," he says, "scarcely know how to use the compass, and those of the *caïcks*, which are the merchant ships, certainly understand nothing of it. They steer by their knowledge of the coasts, which is very erroneous, and they generally trust themselves in long voyages, as to Syria and Egypt, to Greeks, who have run the course with Christian privateers, and have got the track of the countries of Asia and Africa by rote." Indeed, the Turkish fleets were always manned by Greeks, and they vanished with phenomenal rapidity before the Greek fireships during the Greek War for Independence. The loss of her African dependencies made even a spasmodic naval activity on Turkey's part superfluous, and the posses-

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sion of a distant naval outpost like Crete an unprofitable burden. At the present day so eminent an authority as Captain Rudolf von Labrés, author of *Politik und Seekrieg*, has expressed the conviction that "from the military point of view, the loss of Crete could only be regarded as strengthening Turkey's power."

From a political point of view, also, it was obvious that Turkey stood to gain much more than to lose by a frank recognition of the plain fact that Crete was already Greek. The precarious condition of the island had for seventy years furnished the main cause of discord between the Ottoman Empire and the Greek kingdom, and did more than anything else to embitter the relations between the Turkish and Greek inhabitants of the Empire. Once that source of animosity removed, the two countries and the two nations would be able to cultivate the friendship which is so necessary to their mutual welfare. Besides, the reoccupation of Crete, even if it were a desirable, was far from being a practicable adventure. The reconquest of the island would necessitate a first-rate fleet, and at least a quarter of a million of picked troops. The Cretans, as their whole history shows, are fighters born and bred, and their country is as favourable to guerilla warfare as Montenegro. Even after its reconquest, Crete would need an enormous garrison to keep it under permanent subjection. In the meantime, while the best portion of the Turkish army was entangled in a protracted Cretan campaign, the Ottoman Empire would probably become the theatre of troubles, internal and external, that might cost it its very existence ; for, as

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has been seen, the most conspicuous feature of the Young Turk edifice is its instability, and the most urgent requisite for its consolidation is peace. The first consequence of a forward policy in the south would in all probability be an attack from the north. Austria is fully prepared to profit by any disturbance of the peace in the Near East, and Bulgaria would welcome such an opportunity for realising her own ambitions. In 1897, during the last Greco-Turkish War, Prince Ferdinand sold his neutrality to the Sultan in return for ecclesiastical privileges in Macedonia. Now there are no more bishoprics to be had in Macedonia, and even if there were the Young Turks would not be disposed to sell them. In the circumstances, Bulgarian statesmen might well consider that an invasion of Ottoman territory would be the best policy dictated by self-interest. And if the Bulgars moved, the Serbs would not be slow to follow suit.

All these considerations were duly weighed by responsible Turkish statesmen, and among them I found a very sane recognition of facts. But unfortunately, since the Revolution of July, 1908, Ottoman policy has to a large extent passed out of the control of responsible statesmen. The Committee of Union and Progress, which has, by means of the army, imposed so far its will upon both the Parliament and the Porte, has small regard for facts. The majority of its members thought that the Cretan affair offered a tempting opportunity for raising Turkish prestige abroad and for restoring concord at home. Crete might or might not be in itself a prize worth fighting for. But Greece was. The military unpreparedness of the Greek kingdom rendered aggression an easy

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enterprise. A successful war against a Christian nation was eminently calculated to divert attention from domestic divisions, to unite all the Mohammedans of the Ottoman Empire by reanimating their religious fanaticism, and to cover Young Turkey with a facile glory. It was of no consequence to Turkish chauvinists that the Greek kingdom had furnished them with no excuse for attack ; that, on the contrary, the correct attitude it had consistently maintained throughout the crisis, and its chivalrous omission to take advantage of Turkey's Austrian and Bulgarian preoccupations in the autumn, or of the counter-revolution in the spring, constituted so many proofs of friendship and so many titles to gratitude. It mattered nothing to them that a wanton assault upon Greece would permanently alienate from them the sympathies of the large and powerful Greek element in the Empire, without whose co-operation the national revival of which the Young Turks dream is doubtful, if not utterly impossible. Blinded by martial ardour and political inexperience, they began, as soon as the disputes with Austria and Bulgaria were settled, to inflame their co-religionists against the Greeks, describing in their Press the loss of Crete as an irreparable calamity to the Ottoman Empire, and declaring their determination to go to war rather than submit to the surrender of a few square inches of red calico. These bellicose outbursts were supported by a prodigious output of imaginary grievances with respect to the position of the Mohammedan inhabitants of Crete, and the latter, who had for ten years lived peacefully with their Christian fellow-countrymen, sharing all the rights and privileges of citizenship,

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were roused to oppose the union of the island with Greece.

One of my principal objects in visiting Crete was to ascertain on the spot the grounds upon which this local opposition was based, and the extent to which the grievances so plentifully disseminated by the Press of Stamboul corresponded with facts. The results of my investigation tended to shake my faith in the Turk's truthfulness, and to show that the proverbial reflection upon Cretan veracity is amply justified by the Mohammedan section of the population. I will give one illustration. The official organ of the Monastir branch of the Committee of Union and Progress had addressed to the Ottoman Parliament and the Porte a vigorously worded protest against the cession of Crete to Greece, and sought to enforce its arguments by dwelling on the alleged oppression of the Mohammedan minority by the Christian majority. As an instance of such oppression it quoted a statement reproduced from a Turkish newspaper published in Canea, according to which the authorities had arbitrarily arrested the editor of that newspaper, and had abolished the Mohammedan College of Canea, because it had observed the day of the new Sultan's accession to the throne as a holiday. I made inquiries in Canea itself, and I found that the first part of the statement was a fiction pure and simple, and that the only truth about the second was as follows. The college in question, which is a Government institution, supported entirely from public funds, had closed for three days without notifying, much less asking for permission from, the proper authorities. Thereupon the Ministry of Public

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Instruction performed its duty by writing to the Director of the College and reprimanding him for his breach of discipline. The Ministry would have been perfectly justified in punishing that functionary, but it contented itself with a mere reprimand, lest greater severity should give rise to misconstruction. This simple fact was deliberately exaggerated by the local journal into an act of political persecution, and its version was eagerly accepted and amplified by the Young Turkish organs. This was only one example of a systematic fabrication of similar stories by the Cretan Mohammedans for consumption in Constantinople and elsewhere outside Crete. To such an extent was this industry in mendacity carried on that the foreign Consuls in the island, wearied of investigating imaginary complaints, refused to listen any longer to them, and the head of the local Government was obliged to tell his Mohammedan friends, laughingly, "My dear men, you overdo it. It is a very bad policy, for if you ever happen to have a genuine grievance nobody will believe you!"

In point of fact, genuine grievances were remarkable for their non-existence. The Cretan Mohammedans, by the unanimous evidence of all witnesses, the Consuls of the Powers included, had since the establishment of autonomy in 1898 been treated with the greatest liberality. Their lives, their property, their political rights, and their religious prejudices were scrupulously respected by their Christian fellow-citizens. The perfect religious toleration that reigns in the island is abundantly illustrated by the number of minarets from which the muezzin calls the faithful to prayers five times a day, as well as by the number of

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flourishing Mohammedan schools which are maintained by the Government, and by the many other privileges which are enjoyed by the Mohammedan community. For example, all disputes relating to religious and social life—marriages and divorces, the guardianship of minors, wills and bequests, &c.—are brought before Mohammedan cadis who derive their jurisdiction from the Sheikh-ul-Islam. The Mohammedan communes elect their own aldermen, mayors, and muftis, who appoint and dismiss religious ministers and teachers in their mosques and *medressehs*, and who have a voice even in drawing up the curricula for the secular schools: so promptly do the Christians recognise that differences of cult render inevitable a certain independence of jurisdiction and education, and so ready are they to accord this necessary measure of self-government of which the Young Turks seek to deprive the Christian communities in Turkey.

For the rest, the presence of Mohammedan representatives in the Cretan Chamber and in the Administration bears ample witness to the reality of political equality. Indeed, the Mohammedans politically may be said to occupy a more privileged position than their Christian fellow-citizens. As regards Parliamentary elections, they are constituted into separate electoral colleges, which gives them a representation out of proportion to their numbers. Although they form barely one-tenth of the population, they have eight out of sixty-five deputies. The actual prefect of Canea, the capital of the island, is a Mohammedan. By a law passed in 1899 they were exempted for eight years from the educational qualifications for

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public employment which were demanded from Christian candidates. As regards military service also, though in theory the Mohammedans are liable to conscription on the same terms as the Christians, they are habitually allowed to obtain exemption on payment of a small sum of money, or even without any payment at all. Thus last year there were only a dozen Mohammedan recruits in the militia—a force numbering altogether 1,630 officers and men—and this year it is doubtful whether there is even one. In brief, no one coming to Crete fresh from Turkey can fail to be impressed by the fact that, whereas in the latter state “liberty, equality, and fraternity” is still an aspiration, in Crete it is a living reality.

That the Mohammedans themselves are fully conscious of the advantages of their position is shown by their increasing reluctance to leave the island. A good many—and those belonging to the least desirable class—fearing reprisals on the part of the Christians for the tyranny to which they had subjected the latter during two centuries, and more especially for the massacres of 1897, emigrated to Turkey as soon as Crete was proclaimed autonomous; and numbers of these emigrants are at this hour terrorising the environs of Smyrna. But on the restoration of order this exodus was arrested, for the fear of reprisals has proved baseless. The Christians, aware that their political future depends upon their ability to forget the past, have been honestly anxious to let the dead bury their dead. The Mohammedans have, under normal conditions, displayed a similar facility in adjusting themselves to the new order of things, as is proved by their participation in the political and

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administrative life of the country. This facility was all the greater because, in blood and speech, they are indistinguishable from the rest of the Cretans. Even the negroes in the island have Greek for their mother tongue. Of the other Mohammedans, the great landowners are for the most part descendants of Venetian settlers who had long before the Ottoman conquest lost every vestige of their origin except their names and escutcheons. These aristocrats, after their defeat, acted as all other aristocrats have acted in every country subdued by the Turks. They accepted the privileges offered to renegades by the victor and retained their lands by renouncing their faith. Their history is pictorially recorded to this day on many of their castles, where a verse from the Koran may be seen engraved over a Christian coat-of-arms. The bulk of the Mohammedans are the descendants of humbler Cretans similarly converted to Islam. But they all, no matter what their distant origin may be, speak nothing but Greek. Further, there are degrees in the extent to which the Koran has superseded the Gospel among them. Many of these Mohammedans of Crete, like many of their co-religionists in Albania, remained for generations after their conversion Christians at heart, secretly baptizing their children and openly intermarrying with their Christian neighbours. Even as late as 1856, when an illusory religious toleration was proclaimed in the Ottoman Empire, a number of these pseudo-converts threw off the cloak and came forward in their true character—an event which recalls the parallel reversion of the crypto-Jews of Spain and Portugal upon the abolition of the Inquisition.

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Yet, this community of origin notwithstanding, the Mohammedans of Crete, taken as a whole, describe and regard themselves as Turks. "My tongue is Greek," said to me one of the leaders of Mohammedan public opinion in Canea, "but my heart is Turkish." I paid to his statement all the weight which it deserves. For neither race nor language constitutes nationality, but only national consciousness. Men are what they wish to be. In Macedonia there are thousands of Slavonic-speaking peasants who yet call themselves "Greeks," and I have always considered that they had a perfect right to do so. Likewise when confronted with these Greek-speaking "Turks" of Crete I readily accepted their point of view. I found that, while recognising all the practical advantages of their position, they preferred the Turkish rule. Especially since the fall of the Hamidian despotism there has sprung up among the less well-informed of them an extravagant hope that New Turkey may succeed in recovering all that Old Turkey had lost—Egypt, Algeria, Tunis, Cyprus, &c.—and they would like to take their share in this Ottoman revival. Such dreams apart, they cherish a sentimental attachment to the flag of the crescent analogous to that cherished by the "Turks" of Bosnia and Herzegovina, who, despite their Servian blood and speech and despite the material advantages derived from the Austrian rule, I have found sincerely longing for the restitution of the Sultan's power. The sentiment is eminently human and therefore eminently respectable. It is not easy for men to reconcile themselves to equality in countries where they have so long been accustomed to superiority. But the

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political weight of this feeling can easily be over-rated when one considers that the people who nourish it have prospered under the Cross as they had never prospered under the Crescent, that they form only one-tenth of the population, and that its gratification would involve the sacrifice of the feelings—equally human and equally respectable—nourished by the other nine-tenths. The Cretan Mohammedans themselves seemed aware of the weakness of their position. For, while the Christians in talking to me rested their case on my sense of equity, the “Turks” appealed to my sense of expediency. “England,” they said, “has millions of Mohammedan subjects, and it is to her interest to support the Mohammedan cause. England’s prestige in Constantinople is waning before that of Germany, and it is to her interest to conciliate the Turks,” and so on. Being no politician, I tried to judge the case on its merits, and I came to the conclusion that the only solution of the problem, whether viewed from the point of view of abstract justice or of sound practical policy, is the one which accords with the wishes of the overwhelming majority. The island has reached a point in its political development from which it is impossible to recede. Any attempt to undo what has been done by the unanimous decision of nine-tenths of the inhabitants, and with the connivance of the Powers, would lead to a catastrophe the dimensions of which cannot be easily calculated.

However, the Committee of Union and Progress pursued its militant course both in Constantinople and, through its provincial ramifications, all over the Ottoman Empire, its oratorical efforts being accompanied with an extensive boycott of Greek goods in

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all the ports of Turkey. The responsible Government was forced to yield to the clamour of its masters, and against its better judgment it changed its tone with regard to the Cretan Question. The Porte, which a few months earlier had readily admitted that the matter lay entirely in the hands of the Powers, now claimed the right to see that the Sultan's shadowy suzerainty over Crete was maintained at all costs, and in proof of the earnestness of its claim it proceeded to mobilise both the military and naval forces of the Empire in order to bully Greece into abstaining from pressing her claims. The Powers were confronted with an awkward dilemma. On one hand, they felt compelled to fulfil the solemn engagements they had entered into with the Cretan people. On the other hand, they felt reluctant to disoblige Young Turkey or to risk the complications of a Greco-Turkish war. Their action was typical of that feeble predilection for patching-up which, in an age of political mediocrity, passes for statesmanship. They tried to satisfy their conscience by withdrawing the remainder of their troops from the island, and they tried to satisfy their interests by sending their fleets to pull down the Greek flag which the islanders hoisted over the fort of Canea when the last of the international troops left. The solemn demolition of a flagstaff by the united forces of four Great Powers had its comic side. And the comicality of the ceremony was enhanced by the fact that the unfortunate flagstaff in question was only one out of scores of similar flagstaffs that had existed over the island without any protest from anybody since October, 1908. But the act was calculated to appease the wrath and to flatter the *amour propre* of

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the Young Turks. To make assurance doubly sure, the four Powers replaced their land forces by warships stationed off the coast to protect against molestation the Sultan's suzerainty as represented by the few square inches of red calico on the desert rock in Suda Bay.

Thus the Cretan Question still remains a question. Patching up is not mending, and I venture to prophesy that the pusillanimity of the Powers will soon result in a reopening of the sore that may cost them infinitely more than a final settlement of the matter, on the basis of pecuniary compensation offered by Greece, would have done. Already their political failure has produced one of its inevitable effects—a crisis in Greece. The Greeks, and more especially the Greek officers, were not slow to perceive that their national disappointment was due to their military unpreparedness; for it is obvious that, had Greece an army as formidable as the Bulgarian, both the Young Turks and the Powers would have adopted an entirely different attitude towards a cause the justice of which no one disputes. The practical outcome of this perception has been an agitation, on the part of the Greek officers, for the reorganisation of the military resources of the kingdom without further delay. This agitation may attain its object without any serious disturbance of the peace. But it may, on the other hand, lead to a dynastic revolution the counter-coup of which would be felt far beyond the boundaries of Greece. In Crete itself matters remain in a condition of pitiful and perilous unreality. The island at this moment belongs neither to Turkey nor to Greece. Evacuated by the international garrison, it is no longer even under the

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immediate control of the Powers. Internally it is administered in the name of King George, as a province of the Hellenic kingdom; externally it is regarded as a province of the Ottoman Empire; and commercially it is treated by both the Hellenic kingdom and by the Ottoman Empire as a foreign country. The islanders, though they offered no opposition to the hauling down of the Greek flag in Canea, have made no secret of the fact that the one thing that prevents them from hauling down the solitary Ottoman flag from the desert rock in Suda Bay is the presence of the European battleships. In other words, Crete at this hour holds a unique position in the world—the position of a country politically unattached and unharnessed. The *cog Cretois* is left to flap his wings impatiently and to disport himself aimlessly in an international vacuum.

How long can this unnatural condition last? How long will the Powers of Europe keep their warships in the Suda Bay on the foolishly solemn duty of protecting a few square inches of red calico? The grotesqueness of the situation almost eclipses its tragic side. But the tragedy is there all the same, and no serious spectator can help realising that the fate of the island must be defined before there occurs a catastrophe that may endanger the peace of Europe. Such a catastrophe may occur at any moment, for, as has been seen, the chief characteristic of the *cog Cretois* is his inability to acknowledge defeat. The Cretan Government has so far succeeded in preventing the natural exasperation of the Cretan people from seeking vent in acts of violence. But there are limits to its power of controlling a population which can

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hardly be blamed if it regards itself as shamefully deceived by its benevolent protectors. When I was among them, the Cretans told me candidly that they looked upon the recognition of their union with Greece as the price due to them by the Powers for their loyal fulfilment of a solemn agreement, hinting that, if this price was refused at the eleventh hour, and if the refusal was due to the action of the Turks, the local Mohammedans would be the first to suffer for it. The fulfilment of this threat may well prove the signal for the very war which the ancient dame called European diplomacy so sincerely dreads. Meanwhile it is impossible to avoid the cynical conclusion that the collective wisdom of the wisest cabinets in the world has resulted in a melancholy fiasco.

THE END

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